

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

A412130



Samuel Duffield's
Bought at Auction
1788



George Duffield A.M

In tali nunquam lassat venatio sylva.
A D 1884

Tappan Presbyterian Association
LIBRARY.

Presented by HON. D. BETHUNE DUFFIELD.
From Library of Rev. Geo. Duffield, D.D.

BR
143
.N7

2193

AN

ABRIDGEMENT

OF

Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory,

FROM THE

COMMENCEMENT OF CHRISTIANITY,

TO THE

BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT CENTURY;

CONSTRUCTED UPON A NEW PLAN,

AND

DIVIDED INTO FOUR GRAND PERIODS.

By PATRICK NISBET, D. D.
Miniſter of HUTTON.

EDINBURGH:
Printed for JOHN BELL; and ſold by J. NOURSE,
and RICHARDSON & URQUHART, *London*.

M,DCC,LXXVI.



Gift
Tappan Presb. Ass.
2-23-1932

PREFACE.

THE Chriſtian Church may be conſidered as a vaſt community, a great and noble republic, founded on Divine inſtitution, and governed by peculiar laws both of a religious and political nature. Its internal conſtitution, its ſyſtem of doctrine, diſcipline, worſhip and polity, and its external ſituation and circumſtances in the world, whether proſperous or adverſe, depreſſed or triumphant, do juſtly merit attention. Here muſt open a wide field for curious reſearch and obſervation.

THE

THE ſupport and government of ſo immenſe a ſociety, the movements of ſuch a complicated machine, and,—whilſt it points to ſublimer objects, and would ſteer a courſe to celeſtial habitations, its intimate connection, in mean time, with this world, with princes and potentates, with ſtates and kingdoms, with tranſactions of peace and war, with any new event or revolution, and with men of every rank and character,—all this ſerves remarkably to enrich and diverſify the ſcene of Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory.

THIS, however, it muſt be owned, is too little known by many; and whilſt they roam at large through other leſs valuable volumes of hiſtory, they prepoſterouſly neglect this more curious and intereſting one, calculated to improve a ſolid, ſagacious taſte; and even to gratify, in ſome degree, an imagination turned for

for romance, conſidering the numerous and marvellous incidents with which it is crouded.

To remove a conſiderable objection made by ſome, I have, in the following performance, lopped off numberleſs excreſcencies which over-load our Church-hiſtories in general; whilſt, however, I have judged it proper, to introduce a variety of epiſodes and obſervations omitted by others. Yet, I find, that ſome, on the other hand, have affected ſuch a ſhort, ſyſtematic method, as to render their account of things little better than a mere chronological index, jejune and unintereſting, whilſt they have neglected to lay open the true ſprings of action, to trace the movement and gradual evolution of affairs, or to reſolve into their proper cauſes the various events and revolutions which they too tranſiently relate.

I have aimed at ſomething of a medium between both thoſe extremes: Whether I have ſucceeded or not, others muſt determine.

WITH a farther view to introduce to more general attention the Hiſtory of the Church, I have followed out a kind of continued narration, through the FOUR GRAND PERIODS into which I have divided the Work: This, I knew, would be more agreeable to the preſent poliſhed taſte, than if I had formally thrown it into ſeparate centuries and ſubdiviſions, as moſt other hiſtorians do, though they acknowledge this method is attended with ſeveral diſadvantages. Thus alſo, I have avoided in particular, many diſagreeable repetitions, whilſt, at ſame time, I have been duly attentive to chronological order, and to the natural ſeries of events, and

that

that too, even when I venture on a new and peculiar arrangement.

SOME ſuch compendious view of Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, from the commencement of Chriſtianity to the beginning of the preſent century, as this now offered to the public, has been thought by ſome a performance, if properly executed, in ſome meaſure wanting in the hiſtorical department. This kind of ſummary, containing the elements of Church Hiſtory, may be of particular uſe to ſuch who have not leiſure to peruſe larger volumes, and will not, it is hoped, be altogether unprofitable nor unpleaſant even to thoſe, who have made this branch of ſtudy an object of ſome attention. Even from the brevity of it a deeper impreſſion may be rivetted in the mind,—juſt as we retain a more diſtinct remembrance of a landſcape that is not too extenſive and variegated;

gated; or, as a principal piece in painting ſtrikes the eye more exquiſitely, the leſs it is encumbered with a group of figures.

WHERE the ſubjects were rich and copious, it was not eaſy always to hold an equal hand; and ſome may perhaps imagine, that I have been too diffuſive on ſome occaſions, and affected too much brevity upon others. All I ſhall ſay is, that I apprehend every man is at liberty to chuſe his own ſubject, and to treat it after his own manner, agreeable to the particular plan which he himſelf propoſes. The public poſſeſs the undoubted privilege of approving or condemning as they ſhall ſee proper, and to their verdict every author is obliged to ſubmit.

To compriſe ſo much as I have done within ſuch narrow limits, was accompanied

nied with conſiderable difficulty. I have ſometimes found myſelf doubtful of proceeding, and almoſt ready to be embarraſſed amidſt a multiplicity of ſcenes and events, where the ground would have been ſmooth and eaſy upon a more extenſive ſcale, which did not, however, quadrate with my plan. On the ſame foot, I have been frequently obliged to decline remarks, and even to force myſelf away from reflections that occurred, during my progreſs in this work.

However, I have in general marked the introduction and propagation of Chriſtianity in the world, the perſecutions it underwent, the hereſies which ſprung up in the Church, the illuſtrious men, particularly the primitive Fathers who flouriſhed in it, the moſt celebrated councils which were convened, and the various uſages, rites, and ceremonies gradually adopted.

I have conſidered the riſe, the advancement, and ſyſtem of *Popery*, that amazing, myſterious ſtructure; diſplayed the origin and traced the progreſs of the *Reformation* in the different kingdoms and countries of Europe, in one connected view; aſſigned the cauſes that contributed to ſtop its growth and enlargement; ſtated a ſort of eſtimate between Popiſh and Proteſtant States; and occaſionally introduced many paſſages of civil hiſtory, which ſerved to illuſtrate or embelliſh the hiſtory of the Church. At ſame time, I have paid ſome attention to the diſcovery or cultivation of the arts and ſciences, to the decline or improvements of learning and philoſophy, eſpecially as theſe have had any influence on religion, or upon the ſtate and character of its votaries.

SHOULD this performance be ſo fortunate as to meet with a favourable reception

tion, ſuch a flattering circumſtance may encourage me to publiſh ſeveral other Tracts and Diſſertations on various ſubjects, ſome of which are already prepar ed for the preſs.

In mean time, I hope the indulgent Reader will make candid allowances, for any miſtakes or defects he may diſcover, in what is now with all humility preſented to his hand.

AN ABRIDGEMENT OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY,

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF CHRISTIANITY,

TO THE BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT CENTURY.

IN FOUR PARTS.

PART I.

THE ſtudy of hiſtory in general is agreeable, improving, and uſeful: By it we enter into human life, take a ſurvey of human affairs, gratify the boundleſs curioſity of the ſoul of man, and enlarge the ſphere of our knowledge. In it we learn, in a ſpecial manner, the ſcience of mankind, and behold them in all their variety of characters and ſituations.

This makes to paſs in regular review before us, the origin, the progreſs, the eſtabliſhment of ſtates and kingdoms, the flouriſhing, the decline, the ſubverſion of nations and empires, the various revolutions that have happened in the world, with their ſprings, and movements, and effects.

Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory may not only exhibit theſe occaſionally in the courſe of narration, but is attended

tended with additional circumſtances peculiarly intereſting. The moſt ſplendid ſcenes of civil hiſtory are far ſuperior to vulgar life, and are chiefly diſplayed for the benefit of thoſe who move in higher orbits, and who ſupport public and diſtinguiſhed characters.

The hiſtory of the Chriſtian Church, in its ſeveral ſtages and periods, becomes an object to every Chriſtian, of whatever rank or denomination. His ſacred profeſſion is here more immediately concerned, his paſſions are thereupon more deeply intereſted, and he may derive perſonal advantage from a review of his religion, not in theory, but in real life.

Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory opens a wide and extenſive field, in which a vaſt variety of objects and events muſt occur. Theſe, if minutely traced and carefully delineated, may afford abundance of matter ſufficient for many volumes.

My deſign is only to take a curſory glance of this large region, without traverſing every particular part, and to exhibit to view material ſcenes, the moſt inſtructive and entertaining. This I ſhall attempt, aiming at great brevity, but not over-ſollicitous about all the minuter delicacies of arrangement and embelliſhment, which might perhaps be expected in a more full and formal hiſtory.

The duration of the world from the creation of it, to the appearance of JESUS CHRIST may be divided into ſix ages.

The firſt, is from the creation to the flood, and conſiſts of 1656 years, 1 month, 26 days.

The ſecond, from the end of the deluge till the calling of Abraham, contains 426 years, 4 months, 18 days. Then at the divine call did the Patriarch depart from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan.

The

The third period reaches from the calling of Abraham to the deliverance of the children of Iſrael out of Egypt, a ſpace of 430 years.

The fourth, from the departure of the Jews out of Egypt till the building of Solomon's temple, is 479 years, 17 days.

The fifth, from the building of the temple to the end of the captivity of the Jews, extends to 476 years.

The ſixth, from ſetting of the Jews at liberty by Cyrus king of Perſia, till the birth of JESUS CHRIST, amounts to the number of 532 years.

All theſe together make up 3999 years, and 7 months; though ſome computations of chronology fix it at 3987 years, and others, the exact number of 4000 years.

In this fulneſs of time, and when the proper period determined by the decrees of heaven arrived, JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God became incarnate. As the Son of man he ſprang of the family of Abraham, and of the blood-royal of David, according to promiſe, and was at this time born at Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of the emperor Auguſtus Cæſar.

It is a general opinion, that the temple of Janus was then ſhut, and that a profound peace univerſally prevailed in the world. This pacific ſtate of things favoured the propagation of the goſpel, and thereby the firſt preachers of it were enabled to execute their divine commiſſion with more ſafety and ſucceſs. It likewiſe reflected a luſtre upon chriſtianity itſelf, and gave weight to its credibility, as it was not uſhered into the world amidſt ſcenes of war and bloodſhed, of public diſorder and general commotion, but when mankind enjoyed the ſweets of eaſe and tranquillity, and were more at leiſure to examine with exactneſs, and to weigh with

with deliberation the truth or falſhood of religious pretenſions. This was alſo a proper ſeaſon for the appearance of the great, the merciful Meſſiah, ſuitable to his character as the Prince of Peace, and emblematical of his peaceful religion and empire, the grand objects of which were reconciliation and love, harmony and happineſs.

Some imagine that the actual birth of Chriſt does a few years precede our vulgar æra. But though this event may not be marked with minute preciſion, occaſioned by the different calculations of chronologiſts, yet it is univerſally agreed, that it happened about the year of the world 4000; a thouſand years after the dedication of Solomon's temple, and about the 754th year of Rome.

Then it was that the celebrated Roman republic returned to a kind of monarchical ſtate under the emperor Auguſtus. In his time all the polite arts flouriſhed, and though he was a conſummate Stateſman and an illuſtrious General, yet he was the diſtinguiſhed patron of learning, and allowed men of merit and taſte, free acceſs to his preſence.

The vaſt extent of the Roman empire, and the ſubjection of ſo many nations and kingdoms to the ſupreme dominion of a poliſhed people, was of conſiderable ſervice in civilizing the world, and preparing the minds of men for a candid and honourable reception of chriſtianity. It opened up a ſocial correſpondence among people of different languages and cuſtoms; more eaſy methods of communication to diſtant provinces were formed; the laws and manners of the Romans introduced into foreign countries, gradually improved the rude and barbarous inhabitants, and the benign light and influence of philoſophy, diffuſed a ſoftening and refinement, to which they had been formerly ſtrangers. This, in concurrence with other cauſes, did

did no doubt facilitate the progreſs of the goſpel, after it made its appearance in the world.

But it muſt be acknowledged by all acquainted with hiſtory, that notwithſtanding the perfection to which the polite arts and ſciences were carried, yet religion lay under a dark cloud, and ſuperſtition reigned triumphant both among Jews and Gentiles. The whole heathen world was addicted to polytheiſm and idolatry, held a vaſt multiplicity of gods and goddeſſes, and worſhipped them in the groſſeſt manner. They adored the hoſts of heaven, and bowed down to ſtocks and ſtones, they believed the moſt abſurd and fabulous tales, and approached their falſe deities with rites and ceremonies fooliſh, impure and inhuman. They were ignorant of the true God, who made heaven and earth, and all things therein, a Being of infinite, adorable perfections, and utter ſtrangers to rational and ſpiritual worſhip. In conſequence of this, they ran into all manner of wickedneſs, and a general corruption and profligacy prevailed every where. Thus ſtood the theology and morality of paganiſm.

Even among the Jews, religion was at this period of time very much eclipſed and disfigured. They in ſome meaſure made void the law of Moſes by a number of miſtaken notions, and ſuperſtitious obſervances. Theſe they partly imbibed during the Babyloniſh captivity, and partly derived from the nations around them, with whom they lived in conſtant intercourſe, particularly, the Egyptians, Syrians, and Arabians †. Theſe ill-grounded and fooliſh opinions, and their ſupernumerary rites and ceremonies, which they intermingled with thoſe of the law, were alſo ſuitable to their own vain and corrupt hearts, and favoured the indulgencies of licentious

† Vid. Spencer, De legibus Hebræorum, vol. II. p. 1080, and Joſephus, book III. ch. 7.

licentious practice. Accordingly they embraced many dangerous principles, abandoned themſelves to every ſpecies of vice, and were ſplit into ſects and parties. The moſt famous of theſe were the Phariſees, Sadducees, and Eſſenes. Theſe three celebrated ſects acknowledged the divine legation of Moſes, and the authority of the Prophets, but notwithſtanding this, they ſtruck out new opinions of their own, and abounded in religious innovations, though ſtrictly prohibited from this by their great legiſlator. Thus does the church of Rome own the authority both of the Old and New Teſtament, whilſt yet they maintain doctrines and uſages contrary to both, and repugnant to reaſon itſelf. The Phariſees ſuperadd to the written law, that which they deliver by oral tradition. This they pretend was originally given to Moſes, though not recorded by him, and this they are pleaſed to put upon an equal footing with the former. Thus a wide door is flung open for the inventions and fancies of men, which may be multiplied and modified without end or meaſure. This the Phariſees did in numberleſs reſpects; they diſregarded the genuine meaning of ſcripture, put their own falſe gloſſes and interpretations upon it, and placed the ſtreſs of religion in external ſhew and ceremony, whilſt they were full of deceit, hypocriſy, and wickedneſs.

The Sadducees were a ſect which commenced about 200 years before Chriſt. It is ſaid to have been founded by one Sadoc, who taught there was neither angel nor ſpirit, heaven nor hell; to theſe dangerous tenets his diſciples adhered, denying the reſurrection of the body, and the immortality of the ſoul, whilſt they gave themſelves up to work iniquity with greedineſs.

The

The Eſſenes rejected the letter of the law and the natural meaning of it, and chiefly conſidered it as a kind of allegorical ſyſtem of ſublime and myſterious truths. They indulged flights of enthuſiaſm, placed the whole of religion in ſilence and contemplation; loved ſolitude and abſtraction from the world, affected much rigour and auſterity of manners, and deſpiſed the duties of ſocial life. This fanatical tribe ſpread abroad through Syria, Egypt, and the adjacent countries, and their peculiar notions which aimed at ſomething ſuperior to humanity, infected multitudes, who were of an indolent turn or gloomy complexion. From them I am apt to think, has the Romiſh church copied the monaſtic life, and hereupon founded ſuch an amazing number of convents, nunneries, and monaſteries, to the general detriment of ſociety, but to its own great emolument.

Thus we find the whole world, both Jews and Gentiles, were ſunk into deplorable ignorance, error and wickedneſs, when it pleaſed God to ſend Jeſus Chriſt into the world, as † "a light to enlighten "the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Iſrael." It muſt be acknowledged, that providence raiſed up, from time to time, in different kingdoms and countries, men of exalted genius, who entertained juſter ſentiments and more extenſive views. Such roſe ſuperior in their apprehenſions of religion and virtue to the inferior vulgar, were diſſatisfied with the ſuperſtition of the times in which they lived, and made ſome feeble efforts to inſtruct and reclaim mankind. But they were unequal to the arduous taſk, and they themſelves were partly tinctured with the falſe notions and prejudices which univerſally prevailed, were ſometimes overborne by their unhappy influence, and often perplexed with doubts

† Luke ii. 32.

doubts and uncertainties. This will apply even to the renowned Socrates and the illuſtrious Cicero, the two bright eyes of Greece and Rome.

It required an extraordinary interpoſition of heaven, ſomething above human power, wiſdom, and authority, to rectify the errors and diſorders of the world, to diſpel the darkneſs which hung over it, and to bring about an entire and effectual reformation. This was reſerved for the Son of God himſelf, the great, the magnificent Meſſiah. "To "him gave all the Prophets witneſs!" And Saint John the Baptiſt, a burning and ſhining light, was appointed his fore-runner, to prepare the way before him, and as his herald and harbinger ſolemnly to announce his glorious appearance. John himſelf wrought no miracles, but with a voice which made the whole land of Judea reſound, he called on all to repent, and to receive in a proper manner the approaching Saviour. And ſuch was the dignity of the Baptiſt's office, ſuch the importance of his doctrine, ſuch the innocence and noble auſterity of his manners, that all acknowledged him a Prophet; vaſt multitudes flocked to ſee and hear him in the wilderneſs, and were baptized by him confeſſing their ſins. At ſame time he had acceſs to kings and courts, "Herod feared John, heard "him gladly, and did many things †." Yea ſome were ready to look on him as the Meſſiah himſelf, with ſuch veneration did they regard him, eſpecially as no Prophet had appeared among the people of the Jews for about 500 years before. But he ſoon undeceived them, expreſsly declared that he was not the Chriſt, and ſpoke of himſelf in the moſt diminutive terms when compared with him, "the latchet of whoſe ſhoes he was not worthy to "looſe ‡." But now, towards the concluſion of the

† Mark vi. 20. ‡ Mark i. 7. Luke iii. 16.

the reign of Herod the Great, Jeſus himſelf made his ſolemn entrance into our world; and John particularly pointed him out, and ſaid *, "Behold the "Lamb of God which taketh away the ſins of the "world." He was born of the Virgin Mary after a miraculous manner, by the over-ſhadowing power of the Holy Ghoſt. At the time of his birth, a new ſtar appeared in the eaſt to conduct certain Magi, the Princes and philoſophers of that country to the place of his nativity, who went and worſhipped him, and offered gifts of gold and frankincenſe to him. And indeed in diſtant countries, as well as in Judea, a general opinion prevailed, that there was ſoon to appear in the world a very great and illuſtrious Perſonage. This the Meſſiah really was, tho' to comport with the myſterious plans of Providence, he vailed for a ſeaſon the reſplendent glories of his original nature and character. Accordingly, he who was the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, aſſumed human nature, and was born in a low condition. Soon after his birth, he was obliged to fly into Egypt, to avoid the rage of Herod's cruelty, who had conceived a jealouſy of him. When he was about twelve years of age, he diſputed with the learned Rabbies in the temple, and converſed with the Jewiſh Doctors concerning the ſublime truths of religion, ſo that all were aſtoniſhed at his knowledge and judgment. He increaſed in ſtature and wiſdom, and in favour with God and man, paid filial obedience to his Virgin Mother, and to Joſeph his reputed Father, becauſe betrothed to her, and with wonderful condeſcenſion ſtooped to the obſcurity of private life, till about the thirtieth year of his age. Then, at that time of life fixed for the Prieſts under the law, to enter on the ſacer-

* John i. 29. 36.

dotal function, he aſſumed a public character, and declared himſelf to be the promiſed Meſſiah, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world. Theſe were very high pretenſions, and to ſupport them, and to convince the world of the reality and certainty of them, he appealed to the ſingular excellence and ſublimity of his doctrine, to many famous prophecies pronounced of him, through a ſeries of almoſt four thouſand years, and to the moſt aſtoniſhing miracles performed by himſelf. He ſpake as never man ſpake; he taught as one having authority; and all were amazed at the gracious words which proceeded from his mouth, and at the mighty wonders wrought by his hands. It does not come within our plan here to enter into a detail of the life and actions, and doctrines of Jeſus Chriſt. No Chriſtian can be ignorant of theſe; and a particular proſecution of them would conſtitute rather a theological than an hiſtorical diſcourſe.

But I would obſerve, that the Son of God having fulfilled all righteouſneſs, having finiſhed the work which the Father had given him to do, and concluded the ſcene of his public miniſtry, which continued near four years, was cauſeleſsly and cruelly put to death by the Jews. But for this end he came into the world, to taſte death for every man. He ſuffered the juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us unto God, and offered up himſelf a ſacrifice and propitiation, to atone for the ſins of a guilty world. The chief prieſts, and ſcribes and rulers of the nation were moved with envy againſt him, were offended at the refinement of his doctrine, whilſt the exalted ſanctity of his manners which ſhone with unrivalled luſtre, upbraided their whole behaviour; and the people were diſappointed

ed as to their ſecular proſpects, becauſe he refuſed to be King, and to erect a temporal kingdom. Thereupon their admiration was turned into rage and malice, they treated him with every imaginable indignity, and crucified him between two thieves upon Mount Calvary, without the gates of Jeruſalem. He bore all with unexampled patience and magnanimity, paſſed through the moſt mournful ſcenes of ignominy and agony, with a grace and dignity becoming the Son of God, and at laſt went off in a triumph of goodneſs and charity, praying for his enemies, and ſaying,—"Father forgive them, "for they know not what they do*."

At that memorable juncture, the heavens were over-caſt with ſable darkneſs, the earth trembled as if moving out of its place, and all nature ſtruck with the unuſual and amazing ſpectacle, ſeemed to ſympathize with its ſuffering Lord.

This intereſting and aſtoniſhing event happened when Tiberius was Roman Emperor, Pontius Pilate Governor of Judea, and Caiphas the High Prieſt.—The body of Jeſus was taken down from the croſs by Joſeph of Arimathea, an honourable counſellor, "Who wrapped it in fine linen, and laid it in a "ſepulchre that was hewn out of a rock, wherein "never man before was laid."

But death could not have dominion over him, neither did he ſee corruption. He had power to lay down his life, he had power to take it up again; and therefore, according to his own prediction, he roſe again on the third day triumphant from the grave. He appeared to his diſciples, he eat and drank with them, converſed frequently with them, was ſeen by five hundred brethren at once, abode with them for the ſpace of forty days, inſtructing

* Luke xxiii. 34.

inſtructing them in the things which pertained to the kingdom of God; and afterwards, in the preſence of his Diſciples, he viſibly aſcended up to heaven in a glorious manner.

It was conſonant to reaſon, ſuitable to the wiſdom of the Son of God, and the intentions of Providence, to give a permanent eſtabliſhment and perpetuity, to that divine Religion which Chriſt planted in the world. He therefore took meaſures which were every way proper to promote ſo important a purpoſe. He inſtituted, when upon earth, a ſacred College of twelve Apoſtles. Theſe were appointed as conſtant attendants upon his perſon, to learn with exactneſs and certainty his divine doctrines, to obſerve with attention his illuſtrious miracles, and to witneſs his unſpotted innocence, the exalted goodneſs and dignity of his character. Them alſo he commiſſioned to preach the goſpel, and in his name to work all kinds of miracles for the confirmation of it. Afterwards, the Lord appointed ſeventy other Diſciples for the ſame end, and endued them with the like miraculous powers. Some of theſe were afterwards inſpired to record in writing the ſacred truths of Chriſtianity, which might remain a ſtandard of evangelical faith to all ſucceeding generations.

Some have imagined that the number of the Apoſtles was an alluſion to the twelve Tribes of Iſrael, whilſt the ſeventy Diſciples correſponded with the number of the Jewiſh Sanhedrim. Thus might be intimated, that a period was to be put to the Moſaic œconomy, that the Meſſiah himſelf, who was now appearing, was the Head and Law-giver of the Jewiſh nation, and that they were to regard him and his delegates for the future as their ſupreme Judges in all matters of religion. Theſe whom

whom Chriſt was pleaſed to inſtall as the Prime Miniſters in his Spiritual Kingdom, were not men of eminence and diſtinction, famous for birth, for powerful connections, for wealth, or learning, or eloquence. The religion of Jeſus, noble and divine, was ſuperior to ſuch extrinſic and adventitious circumſtances, and the Founder of our Faith made choice of inferior inſtruments to propagate it, "That the excellency of its power might appear "to be of God, and not of man *," that none might ſuſpect the views of ſecular ambition, or attribute ſucceſs to merely natural means.

Before Chriſt left this world and returned unto the Father, he told his Diſciples that even when abſent, he would not leave them comfortleſs, that he was then going to heaven, there to prepare manſions of immortal bleſſedneſs for all his faithful ſervants; and that, when ſeated on the Throne of his glory, he would in a moſt gracious manner remember them, and from thence pour down upon them, in a miraculous manner, a plentiful portion of the Holy Spirit: That he would lead them into all truth, would teach them all things, and bring whatever he had ſaid to their remembrance; whilſt at ſame time they ſhould be enabled to do greater works than even ſome they had ſeen.

Accordingly, about fifty days after Chriſt's aſcenſion into heaven, and when the time of Pentecoſt was come, a feſtival inſtituted among the Jews, to ſolemnize the remembrance of receiving the law from Mount Sinai, the fiftieth day after their departure from Egypt, an event of a moſt extraordinary nature took place, highly favourable for the goſpel, greatly conducive to confirm the faith of the Diſciples, and to qualify them for their important employment. When they were aſſembled

* 2 Cor. iv. 7.

bled together in one place at Jeruſalem, ſuddenly there came a ſound from heaven, as of a ruſhing mighty wind, which filled all the houſe where they were ſitting, ſuch as awakened their deepeſt attention, and ſtruck them with awe and aſtoniſhment. Then there appeared unto them, in a viſible and glorious manner, cloven tongues of fire, which ſat upon each of them. Then was imparted to them a rich variety of gifts and graces, and particularly a power of ſpeaking inſtantaneouſly all kinds of language, a proviſion ſo admirably calculated for the ſpeedy propagation of the goſpel. "They "were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and began "to ſpeak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave "them utterance*." Different nations, Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Meſopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Aſia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and ſtrangers of Rome, Jews and Proſelytes, Cretes and Arabians, heard in their reſpective tongues the wonderful works of God, ſo that all were amazed and marvelled.

Theſe things were not done in a corner; they did not affect obſcurity or ambiguity: They did not happen before a few ſelect friends, who might be ſuſpected of fraud or partiality; they were tranſacted in open day, before promiſcuous multitudes of people, in places of general concourſe, at Jeruſalem the capital of the nation.

The hiſtory of the Chriſtian Church may be now diſtinguiſhed by different æras, or divided into four grand periods.

The Firſt will reach from the commencement of the original and primitive church planted at Jeruſalem by the Apoſtles, to the time of the Emperor

* Vide Acts chap. ii.

ror Conſtantine the Great, when the Roman empire became Chriſtian. And this may be reckoned in the year 324, when the government of the whole Roman empire both in the eaſt and weſt, devolved upon this magnanimous Prince.

The Second, may reach from the time of Conſtantine the Great, to the eſtabliſhment of Papal hierarchy and tyranny. This may be reckoned in *anno Domini* 756, when Pepin King of France, and father of Charlemagne, annexed extenſive territory to the See of Rome, by which the Pope became a temporal Prince, tho' his power and juriſdiction were conſiderable before.

The Third, will extend from the foreſaid eſtabliſhment of Papal authority, to the glorious æra of the Reformation. And this may be fixed *anno Domini* 1517, when the celebrated Luther began to make a public appearance againſt the Church of Rome.

The Fourth period, may run from the Reformation down to this preſent time.

The firſt period preſents to our view the zealous efforts of the firſt teachers of Chriſtianity, its amazing progreſs in the world, its wonderful effects upon the profeſſors of it, in reforming their faith and practice, and ſupporting them under ten grievous perſecutions, from the time of Nero, in the year 64, after the birth of Chriſt, till that under Diocletian, *A. D.* 303.

The firſt Chriſtian church was properly founded by the Apoſtles themſelves at Jeruſalem. Although the bulk of the Jewiſh nation rejected the Meſſiah, yet great numbers believed in him. A multitude of the prieſts and ſcribes came to acknowledge him. Three thouſand Jews were converted at one time by St. Peter, and daily there was a freſh acceſſion of new members. Infallible authority informs

forms us, that "the word of God increaſed, and "the number of the diſciples multiplied in Jeru- "ſalem greatly, and a great company of the "prieſts were obedient to the faith *."

Religion itſelf, ſublime and ſpiritual as it is, muſt be cloathed in part with external form, to give it a body, a viſibility, a reſpectable character and ſubſiſtence in the world. Civil ſociety cannot be preſerved without order and government, ſubordination and ſupremacy. The Chriſtian church has intimate alliance to both theſe; and beſides its own ſacred and more ſolemn inſtitutions, it muſt derive ſtability and ſplendor from a ſteady and well regulated polity. The great lines of this are ſtroked out in Scripture, our Saviour himſelf refers to the authority of the church, points out ſubordination in it, and eſtabliſhes the grand fundamental rule of legal procedure, by two or three witneſſes†. Apoſtolical precept and practice ſerve farther to illuſtrate the ſubject, for the better modelling the frame of the Chriſtian church.

The principal employment of the Apoſtles was to preach the goſpel. That they might attend to this important work with greater aſſiduity, they made choice of elders and deacons, whoſe chief occupation it was to take care of the poor, to receive the oblations of the rich, and to aſſiſt in managing the civil affairs of the church. This burden was increaſed by the overflowing charity of the opulent to their indigent brethren. By this there was a kind of community in goods, and that only for ſome time voluntarily eſtabliſhed among the firſt Chriſtians. The peculiar ſituation of their circumſtances ſuggeſted this meaſure as proper, though not required by their religion, nor obligatory on ſucceeding times. Nay, I think it evi-

* Acts vi. 7, vid. alſo ch. 2. † Mat. xviii. 15, 16, 17, 18.

evident even from apoſtolic hiſtory, that this was but of ſhort duration among the firſt converts themſelves. This may be ſafely inferred, from the frequent exhortations given to the rich, to communicate in part to the poor, from the frequent mention of thoſe liberalities which were conveyed from one place to another, whilſt the diſtinctions of poor and rich were evidently maintained, and from the occaſional voluntary ſupplies, which St. Paul himſelf received from time to time. Nor can any inference be from hence drawn to the diſadvantage of chriſtianity, as if this would prove a bait and temptation to the poor to profeſs it, when by parity of reaſon, it would be an equal or greater diſcouragement to the rich; not to ſpeak of the common calamities and hardſhips, in which all ranks of Chriſtians were involved at that early period.

Although the Jewiſh converts might at firſt occaſionally attend the ſervice of the temple and of the ſynagogue, and though they did not at once entirely renounce all the rites and ceremonies of the Moſaic law, though we find Paul himſelf * circumciſing Timothy, for the ſake of the Jews, going into the temple, and purifying himſelf with ſome who had taken a vow †, yet were they ſoon inſtructed as to the comparative inſignificancy of theſe outward obſervances, now that the ſuperior light of the goſpel had broke in amongſt them, and that this new and more glorious diſpenſation was to ſuperſede the former. Thereupon they thought it proper to hold ſeparate aſſemblies for divine worſhip by themſelves, particularly on the firſt day of the week. In theſe the Scriptures were read, there they were explained in an evangelical manner, and applied in all their proper paſſages with peculiar

* Acts xvi. 3. † Acts xxi. 23, 24, 26.

felicity to Jeſus Chriſt *, the great object of faith and truſt. They likewiſe joined together in pious prayer and pſalmody, ſinging devout ſongs and ſpiritual hymns to God and Chriſt. The practice of preaching the doctrine of the croſs, and the great duties of the goſpel was introduced, and they celebrated in a ſolemn manner the holy euchariſt, the grand memorial of Chriſt's dying love; whilſt the ſacrament of baptiſm was diſpenſed as occaſions offered, ſometimes by immerſion, at other times by ſprinkling.

Affairs of buſineſs relative to the external order and peace of the church, likewiſe demanded attention. Theſe occaſioned the conveening of ſeveral councils at Jeruſalem, in order to judge and determine of matters. † We find in particular, one † aſſembly conſiſting of one hundred and twenty perſons, at the ſolemn election of Mathias into the Apoſtleſhip, to ſupply the vacancy made by the apoſtacy and fall of Judas Iſcariot. ‡ Upon another † occaſion, the Apoſtles thought proper to conveen a multitude of the diſciples, in order to appoint certain men of eminence and credit, to manage the miniſtrations of charity with a prudent and impartial hand, when "they choſe Stephen, a man "full of faith and of the Holy Ghoſt, and Philip, "and Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and "Nicolas, a proſelyte of Antioch."

† || A third aſſembly of the Apoſtles and elders was held upon a very important occaſion. When the Gentiles embraced the Chriſtian faith, ſome zealous Jews ſtill miſled by the prejudices of education, and impreſſed with a veneration for the Moſaic cere-

* The Epiſtle to the Hebrews, and ſeveral addreſſes of the Apoſtles recorded in the book of Acts, may be conſidered as a ſpecimen.

† Acts ch. i. ‡ Acts ch. vi. || Acts ch. xv.

ceremonies, would have obtruded upon them the rite of circumciſion, and commanded them to keep the law of Moſes as neceſſary to ſalvation. This created no ſmall diſſention and diſquiet. The matter was maturely conſidered in a public council, and a ſolemn determination given, declaring the liberty both of Jews and Gentiles, *viz.* their exemption from the yoke of the ceremonial law, a burden, as St. James ſaid in his ſpeech on that occaſion, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear.

The deſigns and views of our Lord's diſciples extended far beyond the limits of Jeruſalem. They traverſed all the cities and villages of Judea preaching the goſpel; next they went to Samaria, and afterwards they divided themſelves into different bodies, and travelled into all the kingdoms and countries of the world, propagating the chriſtian faith, ordaining preſbyters and elders in every city, and planting churches wherever they came. This is confirmed by evangelic hiſtory, and by other † ancient and credible records. Therein we are informed of the famous churches in Aſia, of the churches at Rome, Coloſſe, Corinth, Theſſalonica, Philippi, &c. The active and flaming zeal of the Apoſtles made them fly with ardour over the world, to ſpread the glad tidings of eternal ſalvation by Jeſus the Meſſiah, the Son of God and Saviour of the world. Accordingly, they carried the light of the glorious goſpel into Egypt, Marmorica, and Mauritania; into Idumæa, and Syria; into Ethiopia, Pontus, and Galatia; into Perſia, Media, and Carmania. St. Paul in a particular manner was indefatigable, preaching the goſpel both among Jews and Gentiles, through an immenſe

† Millar's Propagation of Chriſtianity, 2 vols. Dr Arth. Young on idolatry, and F. Albert Fabricius, — Lux evangelii toti orbi exoriens.

immenſe tract of country from Jeruſalem unto Illyricum, as alſo in Italy. And ſome are of opinion, that he penetrated into Spain, France, and the Britiſh iſles. All this was done, and with amazing ſucceſs, within 30 years after Chriſt's aſcenſion into heaven. And thus was fulfilled in a moſt remarkable manner his own prediction, concerning the ſpeedy ſpread of his religion in the world *.

If we look to natural cauſes, and conſider the feeble inſtruments which were employed, very unequal to ſo great an undertaking; if we bring into view the vaſt difficulty of eradicating old and deep impreſſions, which ſuperſtition and time immemorial had made on the minds of men, and of perſuading them to abjure and renounce their ancient opinions and uſages, and to embrace a new religion; if we recollect that the teachers of chriſtianity were ſtrictly prohibited all the artifices of fraud or violence, and that they themſelves had to encounter innumerable hazards and hardſhips and much oppoſition, we muſt neceſſarily aſcribe the rapid progreſs of the goſpel to the miraculous interpoſition of providence, and from thence infer its heavenly original.

The Apoſtles propoſed to the world the ſublime religion of their Divine Maſter in its native and amiable ſimplicity. This might no doubt excite the admiration of a few ſelect ſpirits. But the ſtupendous miracles which they performed, commanded the attention of all. They foretold future events, they healed all manner of diſeaſes, they diſpoſſeſſed demons, they ſpoke all kinds of language, ſome they ſtruck dead, others they raiſed from the grave, and were enabled to confer miraculous gifts upon others in the name of Jeſus. Thus

* Matth. xxiv. 14. Mark xiii. 10. Matth. xxviii. 19, Col. i. 23.

Thus a divine power accompanied theſe ſpiritual heralds, enforced their miniſtrations with a ſacred energy, and beſtowed upon them an irreſiſtible authority.

Therefore they went forth and preached every where with moſt ſurpriſing ſucceſs,—"the Lord "working with them, and confirming the word "with ſigns following,—God bearing them wit-"neſs with prodigies and wonders, and with di-"vers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt *."

Neither was it a mere external profeſſion of Chriſtianity which prevailed in this early period. The lives and manners of the primitive Chriſtians are juſtly celebrated, and held forth to view as models of exalted ſanctity and virtue. Men forſook the ſuperſtition and licentiouſneſs of heatheniſm, and embraced the pure and ſpiritual religion of Jeſus from principle. This they did in the face of danger, trials and perſecutions. They had to combat the prejudices of education, and ſubject themſelves to the ſevere though reaſonable regulations of the goſpel. This they would not have been forward to do in their then preſent circumſtances, had they not inwardly approved of them, and firmly reſolved to conform to them. They were animated with the zeal of new converts, and inſpired with ardent faith and charity. The ſtrict exerciſe of eccleſiaſtical diſcipline alſo proved a ſacred fence.

The remembrance and notoriety of thoſe grand events and facts which had ſo recently happened, on which their religion was founded, lay cloſe in their thoughts, and a frequent diſplay of miracle overawed and enlivened them. Even their moſt implacable enemies were ſometimes obliged to do juſtice

* Mark xvi. 20. Heb. ii. 4.

juſtice to their characters, to acknowledge their innocence, and admire their virtues.

But whilſt we contemplate this delightful ſcene, behold with pleaſure the converſion of the Gentiles, and mark the trophies and triumphs of the goſpel among Pagan and Barbarous nations, muſt we not feel ſenſations of ſorrow and ſurpriſe at the obſtinacy and infidelity of the Jews, the once favourite people of God? Blinded with prejudice, and actuated by the moſt ignoble and perverſe paſſions, they had rejected the Meſſiah, and crucified the Prince of Life and Lord of Glory who had come to redeem the world. Notwithſtanding the remarkable completion of ancient prophecy as centering in him; in contempt of all that variegated and ſolemn ſcene of ſtupendous miracle which they had ſeen, the great body of that nation ſullenly continued in unbelief, in darkneſs and deluſion. They were fired with rage againſt the Chriſtians, inflicted the moſt violent hardſhips upon them, perſecuted them unto death, and took all imaginable methods to diſparage and extirpate their religion. They ran into all kinds of licentiouſneſs, were immerſed in ſuch univerſal corruption and profligacy, that their own hiſtorian Joſephus declares, That if the ſword of the Romans had not been drawn againſt them, he verily believed that fire and brimſtone had been poured down from heaven upon them, as it had been on Sodom and Gomorrah.

And indeed, the divine vengeance did at laſt overtake them in ſo ſignal and aſtoniſhing a manner, as is not to be parallelled in human hiſtory. It fatally ended in the total deſtruction of their temple and polity, in the ruin of their city and country, and the diſperſion of the Jews. This awful cataſtrophe was particularly predicted by Chriſt,

Chriſt, * and marked in ſuch ſtrong characters, and with ſuch high colouring of figurative expreſſion, agreeable to the genius of prophecy, as to be thought by ſome partly deſcriptive of the day of judgment. But it had a dreadful accompliſhment ſo ſoon as the year 70, about 36 years after the death of Chriſt, whoſe blood the Jews had imprecated upon themſelves and their children, little ſuſpecting the fatal fulfilment of their own prayers.

It was uſual among the eaſterns to expreſs themſelves in bold and metaphorical terms. Their writers deſcribe any grand revolutions in ſublime language and pompous imagery, and uſed, as in hieroglyphic writing, to repreſent ſtates and empires, kings and nobles, by the luminaries of heaven, the proſperity of the one by the clear effulgence of the other, the adverſity of the former, by an eclipſe of ſplendour in the latter. † The Pſalmiſts and Prophets of the Old Teſtament uſe this elevated and poetical ſtile. Our Saviour adopts it, and naturally applies it to events which were of a moſt extraordinary and ſtriking nature; and the ſpirit and ſolemnity of prophecy rendered this peculiarly ſuitable. Not only were uncommon and unheard-of calamities to overtake the Jewiſh nation, but their civil and eccleſiaſtical polity, their religion, their laws, and government though of Divine original, were to be diſſolved. A more perfect ſyſtem was to be introduced, and built as it were upon the ruins of what was hitherto ſupported even by ſacred authority. This did anew interpoſe in a remarkable manner, to ſubſtitute ſomething

* Matth. ch. xxiv. Mark ch. xiii. Luke ch. xxi.

† Vid. Dr Newton on the Prophecies, vol. 2. p. 504, alſo Warburton's Divine Legation, vol. 2. book 4. *&c.*

ſomething more noble and refined, and to erect a ſtill more ſpiritual empire, better adapted to the nature of man, and the general circumſtances of the world, and more agreeable to the plans of Providence.

All this ſeemed to require a more than ordinary apparatus. Theſe revolutions in the lower world, were uſhered in by ſigns and tokens in the upper. The ſun, the moon and ſtars are repreſented as interfering, amidſt the deep diſtreſs of nations upon earth, whilſt the waters of the ſea are agitated, and the waves and winds rage tumultuouſly, and all nature appears as it were in commotion. Eclipſes, comets, ſurpriſing prodigies and meteors in the air, which actually preceded the ruin of Jeruſalem, the many awful circumſtances that attended it, and the very important conſequences which enſued, amply juſtify ſuch manner of ſpeaking as our Saviour makes uſe of. High and awakening as the prophetic deſcription was, it did not riſe above the dreadful events which actually took place. Chriſt foretold the appearance of many falſe prophets, who pretending to be the Meſſiah would do incredible miſchief. However pacific the preſent diſpoſition of ſovereign ſtates and princes might then be, and however calm and ſettled the public tranquility at that juncture was, though the Jewiſh nation was unembroiled in any wars with their neighbours, or diſputes with the Romans, yet he plainly predicted that great commotions and diſturbances ſhould ſoon ſpring up, that foreign wars and inteſtine broils would quickly commence, that nation ſhould riſe up againſt nation, kingdom againſt kingdom, and that a man's enemies ſhould be thoſe of his own houſe: That ſevere famines and peſtilences ſhould rage, and ſweep away vaſt multitudes of people: That dreadful

dreadful earthquakes, and trouble and anguiſh of various kinds, ſhould increaſe the general calamity: That fearful ſights and ſigns from heaven ſhould alarm and terrify an aſtoniſhed world: That armed hoſts ſhould encompaſs Jeruſalem, caſt a trench about it, hem in the inhabitants on every ſide, cover them at laſt with deſolation, and raze their glorious Temple to the ground, ſo that not one ſtone ſhould be left upon another, of that moſt magnificent fabrick. All this was literally fulfilled, as Joſephus the Jewiſh hiſtorian, one of their own commanders, and an eye-witneſs, relates.

Falſe prophets actually aroſe, who ſeduced and ruined many credulous people. The Romans were involved in wars with the Syrians, Samaritans, and other neighbouring nations, before they brought the flames of war into Judea. The Jews divided among themſelves, and ſplit into numerous and violent parties, ſo that by inteſtine faction and ſedition, they ſpilt more blood, and ſpread more dreadful havock, than what their very enemies did.

There were alſo terrible convulſions of the earth in Apamea, Laodicea, and Campania *. A violent famine raged in the reign of Claudius which is mentioned in the Acts of the Apoſtles †; and the ſame is likewiſe recorded in profane hiſtory ‡. Amazing omens and prodigies appeared in the ſkies, contending armies, chariots and horſes of fire: And a blazing ſtar, in the form of a ſword, hung over the city of Jeruſalem for a whole year together before it was deſtroyed. This is atteſted by Joſephus ‖ the Jewiſh, and Tacitus **, a Roman hiſtorian.

* Tacit. Annal. lib. 12. ſect. 43. 58. † Acts xi. 28.

‡ Sueton. Claud. cap. 28.—Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 2. cap. 8.

‖ Joſeph. Bell. Judaic. lib. 6. cap. 5.

** Tacit. Hiſt. lib. 5. ſect. 13.

At length the fatal period arrived: The flames of war were kindled in the 12th year of Nero's reign, and the 66th of the Chriſtian æra, by an inſurrection of the Jews againſt the Romans, exaſperated by the cruelty of Geſſius Florus their Governor, and of the Syrians who dwelt at Cæſaria, whom he countenanced. It ſpread into Egypt and the eaſt, and many Jews were maſſacred not only in Judea, but alſo at Alexandria and Antioch. When Nero was informed of the revolt, he ſent Veſpaſian with troops to quell the rebellion. In two campaigns he took all the cities of Galilee, and prepared to beſiege Jeruſalem in form. At this criſis the Emperor died. Veſpaſian being called to ſucceed him, ordered his ſon Titus to proſecute the war. This he accordingly did with conſummate bravery and reſolution. He laid ſiege to Jeruſalem, a city of large extent, and very populous of itſelf, and where incredible numbers of people were then aſſembled from all quarters, on account of the approaching Paſſover. The place was ſtrongly fortified, and well provided with ſtores of all kinds. The inhabitants, tho' miſerably divided among themſelves, yet proved very reſolute againſt the common enemy, and obſtinately refuſed all propoſals of peace which Titus made them. He at laſt carried the place by aſſault, after a ſiege of ſix months. A powerful enemy ruſhed upon them from without, in an irreſiſtible manner; peſtilence, fire and famine raged within the city, violent factions and jealouſies tore the people to pieces, ſo that blood and ſlaughter, cruelty and miſery, rioted in every quarter. The Temple itſelf was ſet on fire, tho' the ſtricteſt orders were given to preſerve it, and, with the city of Jeruſalem, was razed to the very foundations, and laid in ruins. A few towers only were left as mournful monuments of former grandeur.

grandeur. Authentic hiſtory informs us, that Turnus Rufus plowed up the ground on which the temple ſtood; and, notwithſtanding the moſt zealous efforts, it has never been rebuilt. A Turkiſh moſque at this day pollutes the ſpot on which the ſacred Temple of Jeruſalem once ſtood. Juſt now, and for ages paſt, the holy land has been poſſeſſed by Mahometan and Antichriſtian powers. No human ſtrength or device could poſſibly fruſtrate the prediction of Chriſt, or preſerve from deſtruction even the ſanctuary itſelf, the pride and glory of the Jewiſh nation.

The holy Temple of Jeruſalem was one of the moſt famous and ſuperb ſtructures in the world. It was built moſtly of marble, and that ſo white, as to appear at a diſtance like a mountain of ſnow. Some of the ſtones were of an incredible ſize, and ſaid by Joſephus to be forty-five cubits long, five in depth, and ſix broad. Its gates and porticos were moſt magnificent, the whole fabrick was of exquiſite workmanſhip, curiouſly carved, richly gilt within and without, furniſhed with innumerable veſſels of gold and ſilver, and adorned with many coſtly gifts hung around it. Its elevated ſituation upon mount Moriah, almoſt in the center of the city, and over-looking ſpacious and fertile plains, contributed to render it a very pompous and ſplendid ſpectacle. On account of its immenſe opulence, as well as grandeur, it was juſtly celebrated as one of the wonders of the world, and is taken notice of even by profane authors *. We obſerve the Diſciples ſenſibly ſtruck with the ſight of this glorious edifice, and with a kind of rapture pointing it out to our Saviour †. "Maſter, ſay they, "See what manner of ſtones and buildings are "here!"

* Tacit. lib. 5. ſect. 8. Joſephus is full of it.

† Matth. xxiv. 1. Mark xiii. 1.

" here!" Neither was it an unimportant object. Noble and ſtately buildings, eſpecially thoſe that are conſecrated for the ſacred ſolemnities of religion, naturally excite pleaſure and admiration. Nor perhaps can opulent cities or countries better beſtow part of their wealth, than in erecting and endowing Chriſtian churches, if not to all that pitch of grandeur and decoration, which might diſtract the mind or occaſion ſuperſtition, yet with that decency, elegance and liberality, which may preſerve religion from contempt, give encouragement to its Miniſters, and prevent offence to any worſhipper.

With reſpect to the number of Jews deſtroyed at this period†, Joſephus reckons that eleven hundred thouſand were ſlain at the ſiege of Jeruſalem, about two hundred thouſand more in different places during the war, and that one hundred thouſand were made priſoners. The moſt diſtinguiſhed of theſe were reſerved to grace the triumph of Titus. Some of them were expoſed to wild beaſts on the public theatres; others were compelled to fight as gladiators againſt one another, whilſt many fled for refuge to foreign countries.

One ſpecies of miſery to which great multitudes were ſubjected, by a ſingular judgment of heaven, is remarkable. Not forty years before, the unbelieving Jews cried out with a barbarous voice againſt the Son of God, " Crucify him, crucify " him." And now they themſelves felt the pains of crucifixion, which recoiled upon them with a tenfold vengeance. For the dreadful miſeries which the Jews underwent during the ſiege, forced great numbers of them to ſteal out by night into the Roman camp. But Titus, tho' eſteemed a good natured Prince, yet with a view to reduce the city to ſubmiſſion

† Joſeph. lib. 2. cap. 14. 18, *&c.*

ſubmiſſion by terror, ordered all who came out of Jeruſalem to be crucified before the walls. This was executed with ſuch rigour, that for ſeveral days, not leſs than five hundred unfortunate perſons were crucified each day, till there was neither room left to fix croſſes in, nor wood ſufficient to ſupply the demand.

The peculiar protection vouchſafed to the Chriſtians who were in the city is equally memorable. The firſt approach of the Roman army, under Ceſtius Gallus, Preſident of Syria, threatned immediate deſtruction a ſhort time before. But he unexpectedly withdrew his forces, and ſuſpended military operations. Thus an intimation and opportunity were happily given to the Chriſtians to retire, who believed the words which Jeſus had ſpoken, and obſerved the previous ſigns that did prognoſticate the tragical event. And although the deſolation of Jeruſalem was then near at hand, yet was it providentially poſtponed for a while. Then was the critical juncture for regarding our Saviour's ſalutary caution, of abandoning the city, and retreating to the mountains. This the Chriſtians both at Jeruſalem and throughout Judea accordingly did. Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory informs us that they retired to the city Pella, in a mountainous country, not far from the wilderneſs, on the confines of Judea and Arabia, and thus were wonderfully ſaved from the impending calamity.

Jeruſalem lay in ruins, till it was partly rebuilt by the Roman Emperor Ælius Adrian, a little without the precincts of the ancient city. Epiphanius informs us, that this Prince, making a progreſs through the eaſtern parts of the Empire, viſited Jeruſalem forty-ſeven years after its deſtruction by Titus. The reſolution he then formed of rebuilding it, was not executed till towards the latter end of

of his reign. Upon this, the Jews projected the ſcheme of recovering their native country out of the hands of their oppreſſors. Accordingly, about the year of our Lord 134, they revolted againſt the Romans. They choſe one Barchochab for King, and ravaged Judea and Syria. For ſome time they proved ſucceſsful, and made themſelves maſters of Ælia, or the new Jeruſalem *. Appian, who lived at that time, ſays, it was again beſieged by the Romans, and entirely conſumed by fire. The Roman arms were every where victorious. The Jews were ſubdued by a dreadful ſlaughter. Fifty of their ſtrongeſt caſtles, and 985 of their beſt towns were demoliſhed. 580,000 men were ſlain by the ſword, beſides a vaſt multitude who periſhed by fire, famine and ſickneſs. An immenſe number of the Jews who ſurvived this general maſſacre, were ſold like cattle, and carried over the face of the earth as ſo many ſlaves.

Notwithſtanding this, they afterwards made ſucceſſive attempts to ſhake off the Roman yoke, but all in vain. The Emperor Julian, called the Apoſtate, an inveterate enemy to Chriſtianity, began to rebuild the Temple of Jeruſalem, with a view to fruſtrate the prophecies of Scripture. He gave immenſe ſums for this purpoſe, and endeavoured to ſtrengthen the hands of the Jews in this undertaking, with the whole power of the Empire. He aſſigned the charge of inſpection to Alypius of Antioch, who had been ſometime before Lieutenant in Brittain. He ſet about the work with the greateſt vigour, and was aſſiſted in it by the Governor of the province. But providence frowned, and in a miraculous manner defeated the deſign, as ſeveral authors declare. In particular †, Ammianus Marcellinus,

* Appian, de Bell. Syr. p. 119.

† Ammian. Marcell. lib. 22. *Vide* Warburton's Julian.

cellinus, a Gentile in religion, and a warm defender of Julian, expreſsly ſays, "That whilſt Alypius, aided by the Roman Governor, was forwarding the work with all his might, terrible globes of fire iſſued from the foundations, which they firſt rent by violent ſhocks; and the workmen who attempted to begin the work a-new, were at different times burned alive, whereupon the place became inacceſſible, and the enterprize fell to the ground."

Since that time, we do not read of any vigorous efforts made by the Jews to recover their liberty. Paleſtine has been in conſtant ſubjection to ſome foreign power, as firſt to the Romans, and afterwards to the Saracens, then to the Franks, next to the Mamalucs, and now to the Turks.

Perhaps it was proper to dilate a little on theſe important matters, which relate to the ancient peculiar people of God. Thus too, we have ſeen a remarkable period put to the Moſaic diſpenſation, and a famous prophecy of our Saviour faithfully fulfilled, which ſerves to eſtabliſh the Chriſtian: We have ſeen the ſignal judgments of heaven inflicted upon the Jews for their infidelity and wickedneſs, whilſt the remains of them are diſperſed over the globe, unmixed with other people, and ſtill carrying about with them national badges of diſtinction. However, this their wonderful ſeparate preſervation leaves room for a viſible converſion of them to Chriſtianity, expected in the latter days, agreeable to various prophecies concerning them in holy writ; the completion of which will make the world reſound with joy, and greatly increaſe the laurels and triumphs of the goſpel.

We muſt now caſt our eyes on other objects, that ariſe within the period at preſent under review.

Notwith-

Notwithſtanding the general ſpread and purity of the goſpel in the primitive times, yet various ſects and hereſies ſoon ſprang up in the Chriſtian church. Many of the Jewiſh converts retained a fond attachment to the Moſaic rites and ceremonies, and endeavoured to intermingle theſe with the doctrines and inſtitutions of the goſpel. Judaizing teachers appeared in the Apoſtle's days; and Paul, in particular, took frequent opportunities to reprehend them. The very firſt diſpute and diſſenſion we read of aroſe from that quarter. The grand article in Chriſtianity was, juſtification by faith in Chriſt, and through his merits and mediation, whilſt at ſame time, holineſs of heart and life was required as an indiſpenſible qualification. But theſe Jews urged the neceſſity of obſerving the law of Moſes, without which, they ſaid, ſalvation was not to be expected. An Apoſtolic council hereupon was conveened at Jeruſalem, as formerly noticed, which determined the matter with great propriety, and declared a happy exemption from the burden of Jewiſh ceremonies. Still however this leaven wrought, and proved introductory to farther abuſes. Men were not ſatisfied with the pure ſimplicity of the goſpel. Captivated with a love of innovation, prone to be miſled by the force of giddy imagination, and too credulous to the inventions of deſigning [illegible] they were often carried away to medi[illegible] a change or an adulteration of that Divine Religion which Jeſus taught.

But not only did the Jews affect to blend their own traditions and uſages with the genuine doctrines of the goſpel, ſome of the Gentile converts were likewiſe deſirous of introducing part of their peculiar opinions and cuſtoms into the Chriſtian ſyſtem. Many of the Pagan philoſophers converted to Chriſtianity, were yet deeply tinctured with notions

notions of falſe philoſophy, and unfortunately endeavoured to transfer theſe to that new religion which they embraced *. To make the coalition more conformable and of a piece, they uſed the moſt ingenious means to accommodate the principles of the goſpel to their own philoſophical ſchemes. Thus they corrupted the ſublime religion of the Son of God, and did new-model it according to their own fooliſh fancies. Both the Oriental and Grecian philoſophy thus proved productive of much miſchief and great diſturbance to the Chriſtian church. From their boſom originally iſſued moſt of thoſe ſects and hereſies which chiefly haunted and perplexed the world during the three firſt centuries. A minute detail of theſe would almoſt conſtitute a volume by itſelf, and would be more curious than inſtructive, conſidering the ſuperior light of later and more eſtabliſhed times.

We find St. Paul, in ſeveral of his epiſtles, naming and condemning ſome of the primitive hereticks, ſuch as Alexander, Hymenæus, Hermogenes, Demas, and Diotrephes. They firſt became corrupters of Chriſtianity, and ſome of them afterwards apoſtates from it. Simon Magus is reckoned by ſome the Arch-heretic. We read of him in the Acts of the Apoſtles †, where he is repreſented as a magician, who bewitched the people of Samaria with his ſorceries. He gave himſelf out for ſome eminent perſon, and affected to be called "The great power of God." He was ſtruck with wonder, when he beheld the miracles wrought by Philip, believed and was baptized. But impiouſly he propoſed to purchaſe the gift of the Holy Ghoſt

* For illuſtration of this, *vide* Dr Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. tranſlated into Engliſh by Dr M'Lean, vol. I. p. 150.

† Acts, chap. viii.

with money, for which he was ſharply reprehended by St. Peter, as being ſtill in the gall of bitterneſs and bond of iniquity. He was a Samaritan by birth, and ſtudied philoſophy at Alexandria. But his talents and acquiſitions he turned into the channel of magic, and became an infamous impoſtor. By a profeſſion of Chriſtianity for ſome time, he intended to derive credit to his audacious pretenſions: Afterwards, he oppoſed the progreſs of the goſpel, and travelled into foreign kingdoms with this malicious deſign. He maintained the eternity of matter, and the exiſtence of a ſupreme evil principle, which, in his opinion, ſhared the empire of the univerſe in conjunction with a benevolent Being. He taught that matter moved of itſelf, from an intrinſic and neceſſary activity, and from its ſubſtance produced the evil genius, with all its attendant train of miſeries. He likewiſe aſſerted the doctrine of fate, the indifference of human actions, the power of magic and divination, with a multiplicity of other errors. Nay, he pretended that in his perſon reſided one of the moſt powerful of the Æons, or divine Genii, ſprung from the Pleroma, or boſom of Deity; and that he had come, by the command of God, to aboliſh the empire of thoſe who had formed the material ſyſtem.

Menander, another Heretic, was alſo of Samaria. It is ſaid that he was a ſcholar of Simon; and he ſeems to have adopted moſt of his abſurdities. He alſo ſet up to be one of the divine Æons, a member of the celeſtial family, and ſaid he was ſent by Heaven to reſcue the ſouls of men who were impriſoned within the body, and to aid them in their conflicts with the demons who had uſurped a terreſtrial empire here below.

The

The Nicolaitans were ſectaries, who at the ſame time that they profeſſed the doctrines of the goſpel, abandoned themſelves to licentious practices, particularly fornication, and eating of things which were offered to idols. They are particularly mentioned in the Apocalypſe*, or Revelation of St. John, and there their character and conduct are repreſented as abominable.

The Cerinthians derive their name from Cerinthus, a founder of an heretical ſect. He was of the Jewiſh nation, but was educated at Alexandria. He attempted to combine with Chriſtianity notions and errors drawn from different ſources, and tempered matters into ſuch a form, as to give it a ſtrong caſt of Judaiſm. Yet, by a particular inconſiſtency, he taught that the God of the Jews, though deſcended from ſupreme Deity, fell into apoſtacy; that Chriſt was one of the divine Æons; that he appeared in order to oppoſe the God of the Jews; that he united himſelf with Jeſus, who was born of the Virgin, and who alone ſuffered upon the croſs, when *Chriſt*, whom he would diſtinguiſh, aſcended to heaven. His followers were further inſtructed to worſhip Chriſt in conjunction with the Father, but to diſown the God of the Jews, yet to retain ſome of the Moſaic rites. Cerinthus appears to be the firſt who ſtarted the opinion of a Millenium, and aſſerted that Chriſt was again to be united with Jeſus, and to reign in a triumphant manner upon earth for a thouſand years, during which time the ſaints were to enjoy all kind of happineſs, and that afterwards they were to be tranſlated to celeſtial regions.

The Nazarenes and Ebionites were ſuch who ſtill continued to obſerve the law of Moſes, when the reſt of the Jewiſh converts judged themſelves releaſed

* Rev. ii. 6. 14, 15.

ſed from its obligations, by embracing Chriſtianity. At length, in the reign of Adrian, theſe zealots for Judaiſm ſeparated from the ordinary aſſemblies of Chriſtians, and worſhipped by themſelves.

One of the moſt famous ſects was that of the Gnoſtics, which was indeed prior to ſome I have mentioned, and with whoſe notions many of the reſt were deeply tinged.

And even under this general denomination moſt of the ſects were claſſed, who were miſled by certain Platonic principles, and who confounded the pure doctrines of the goſpel with mixtures of oriental philoſophy, eſpecially ſuch as reſpected the creation of the world, and the origin of evil. The Gnoſtics obtained this appellation, from a vain conceit that they had arrived to a ſuperlative height of *Gnoſis*, or knowledge, and that this alone was perfectly ſufficient, though they indulged to every irregularity in practice. They affirmed there were two great principles in nature, the one *good*, and the other *evil*; one the author of all excellence and happineſs, the other the cauſe of ſin and miſery. They multiplied their genealogies of deity, from whence numberleſs Æons *, or a kind of inferior divinities ſprang, a favourite doctrine in oriental philoſophy. They ſaid, the ſoul of man was of the ſame ſubſtance with God. They denied the authority of the Old Teſtament, as alſo the divinity of Chriſt. They held ſeveral apocryphal books

* Æon is derived from the Greek word αἰων, *ævum, mundus, ſeculum*, alſo *eternus*, ἀιδιον, *i. e.* always exiſting, eternal, everlaſting. This term was originally given to the ſupreme Being, but afterwards, by the oriental Sages and Gnoſtics, to inferior ſpirits, proceeding from the ſupreme in one eternal chain, of which our world was the laſt link that terminated the whole. Some of the Gnoſtics ſuppoſed the Æons to be the cœleſtial progeny of two Deities of different ſexes, which were the immediate offspring of the Pleroma, e great original parent of all.

books as of ſacred original, ſuch as the Revelations of Adam, the Hiſtory of Noah's wife, &c. They attributed the creation of this lower world to the energy of the evil principle, and conſidered matter as having an obliquity in it neceſſarily tending to vice. They thereupon denied that Chriſt was cloathed with a real body, or that he actually ſuffered upon the croſs. And as they entertained many wild and romantic imaginations, they took unbounded liberty in altering and mangling the New Teſtament writings, in order to force them into a kind of compliance with their peculiar tenets.

Towards the concluſion of the ſecond century a new ſect aroſe, which ſpread through the greateſt part of the Roman empire, and proved very prejudicial to genuine Chriſtianity. Ammonius Saccas was the founder of it, a man of vaſt genius and profound erudition. He was deſcended from Chriſtian parents, and had his education at Alexandria in Egypt, the great ſeat of learning. The votaries of that new philoſophy which he introduced, aſſumed the title of Platonics, becauſe they regarded the ſentiments of Plato concerning the deity, and the ſoul, and an inviſible ſtate, as more congruous to the genius of Chriſtianity, than the opinions of other Pagan philoſophers. Yet they paid a compliment to all ſects and religions, and were of opinion that ſome veſtiges of truth were to be found among each of them. They therefore propoſed to inveſtigate this with care and candor, whereſoever they could perceive any traces of it, to diſtinguiſh the good from the bad, to make a wiſe and accurate ſelection, and to frame a compleat and regular ſyſtem from the whole. From hence they obtained the appellation of Eclectics. Their ſyſtem of univerſal philoſophy was conſidered by

by Ammonius as the ſole ſtandard of religious truth. By this touchſtone, he was to try every ſpecies of philoſophy, every ſect and party, and even the Chriſtian doctrine itſelf. This bold and extenſive project gratified his ardent love of novelty, and afforded an ample ſubject on which his luxuriant imagination might expatiate at large. By this romantic ſcheme, an heterogeneous ſyſtem of religion aroſe, compoſed of all the religions in the world, Chriſtian, Jewiſh, and Heathen. Each was to ſuffer from ſuch an unnatural effort, whilſt, by the magic of invention, fancy, and allegory, every thing was to be explained, ſoftened, or exaggerated, ſo as to effectuate the project of a general coalition. Ammonius maintained, that all the miſtakes concerning religion were occaſioned by departing from the pure and ancient philoſophy of the Eaſt. He therefore revived the doctrines which were received in Egypt *, concerning the Deity and the univerſe as conſtituting one great *whole*, concerning the eternity of the world, the empire of providence, the nature, properties, and duration of the human ſoul, and the government of the world by demons. He was of opinion that theſe inviſible beings were ſo many inferior agents of providence, but that they had been elevated into the rank of gods by the ſuperſtition of men. Thus the Egyptian mythology was aſſociated with the doctrines of Plato, and both were afterwards intermingled with the revelations of the goſpel.

He diſowned the divinity of our Saviour; he permitted a kind of worſhip to be paid to demons; he enjoined great auſterity of life, and a rigorous diſcipline of the body; extolled an entire abſtraction from the world, and recommended the raptures

* Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. tranſlated into Engliſh by Dr M'Laine, vol. I. p. 140, &c. 8vo. edit.

tures and extacies of contemplative life. This gave riſe to a particular ſect, diſtinguiſhed by the name of Myſtics. Theſe multiplied exceedingly, particularly in Syria, Egypt, and other eaſtern provinces, and from thence they travelled into Europe.

The double doctrine, as it was called, which certain moraliſts now introduced, did very much contribute to eſtabliſh the myſtical notions, and to produce the tribe of Aſcetics. Our Saviour eſtabliſhed one rule of faith and manners for all his followers. But a diſtinction was now found out, an ordinary and an extraordinary rule: the one, it was ſaid, was intended for men engaged in the active ſcenes of life; the other, for more elevated minds, fond of ſolitude, and enamoured with celeſtial objects. Upon this, incredible numbers bid an abſolute farewell to the world, retreated into cells and ſolitary places, renounced alliance with mankind, and all the natural connections of ſociety, became inflated with enthuſiaſtical notions, the characteriſtic of the Myſtics; whilſt thoſe of the Aſcetic order, denied themſelves all the comforts of life, macerated their bodies by watching and faſting, prohibited matrimony, trade, and commerce, and all uſe of wine or fleſh, and wrapt themſelves up in ſilence and ſolitude. Thus they imagined they would aſcend in ſublimer contemplations to Deity, hold more intimate communion with Heaven, invite ſupernatural illapſes of the ſpirit, while they held in contempt all terreſtrial ſcenes, and diſregarded the feelings and obligations of ſocial life. This was ſomething ſimilar to the notions of the Pythagoreans and Platonics. This reſembled the doctrine and practice of the Eſſenes among the Jews, and the Chriſtian church has been ſtrongly infected with it. Hence monks have multiplied to ſuch a degree, of many various orders and denominations; hence numberleſs

leſs rites and inſtitutions of ſuperſtition have been ſubſtituted in the room of virtue and real religion; hence the celibacy of the prieſtly order has been eſtabliſhed in the church of Rome, with many uſages and ceremonies and penances, which tend to nouriſh gloom and melancholy, and to give countenance to viſionary ideas and feelings, very remote from the genuine ſpirit of the goſpel, and inconſiſtent with our ſtation and character in human life.

There were various other heretical ſects which infeſted the Chriſtian world, particularly the Valentinians, the Marcionites and Montaniſts, which may be conſidered as ſo many branches of the great Gnoſtic ſect, whilſt each ſuperadded peculiarities of their own, repugnant both to reaſon and ſound Chriſtianity.

In proceſs of time a new kind of ſect appeared, called Manichæans. This title they derived from Manes, or Manichæus their founder. He was a Perſian by birth, educated among the Magi, and afterwards became himſelf one of their number. He was deeply ſkilled in all the Perſian philoſophy, but embraced the goſpel, though with reſerves of a very pernicious nature. His genius was ſublime and penetrating, but prone to fanaticiſm. He formed the adventurous deſign of combining the doctrine of the Magi with the ſyſtem of Chriſtianity. He impiouſly pretended to be the Paraclete ſent by God, in order to compleat that ſalvation which, he ſaid, Chriſt had left unfiniſhed. He himſelf was put to death by Varanes I. King of Perſia, but he had a number of followers who were unfortunately deceived by this grand impoſtor. He maintained the exiſtence of two principles, the one good, the other evil. The firſt he called *light*, the other *darkneſs*. Theſe two Beings were the Creators of all

all things, ſome good, others bad, according to their own reſpective natures, whilſt they themſelves were ſubject to a ſuperintending power, whom he called God. When the Manichæan ſect aſſembled together, they elected a Preſident to repreſent Jeſus Chriſt, twelve rulers as repreſentatives of the twelve Apoſtles, and ſeventy biſhops to ſtand as ſymbols of the ſeventy diſciples. But to give a full account of their tenets and proceedings would greatly exceed the plan I propoſe *.

Noetus of Smyrna ſtarted hazardous controverſies concerning the Holy Trinity. He affirmed that the Father was only God, and that not the Son but the Father united himſelf to the perſon of Chriſt. In the middle of the third century, Sabellius aroſe, and engaged warmly in thoſe theological ſpeculations. He was an African biſhop, and taught his followers to believe that there were indeed three perſons in the Godhead; but then, he denied they were diſtinct or really ſubſiſting, and conſidered them only as ſo many mere names, intended to repreſent the different attributes, energies or operations of the divine nature. His opinions were embraced with ſome variation by ſome, who affected to be leaders of new ſects, particularly, by Beryllus an Arabian biſhop in Bozrah, and by Paul of Samoſata, biſhop of Antioch.

The Novatians occaſioned much diſturbance in the Church by their ill-directed zeal and ſeverity. This ſect was founded by Novatian, a preſbyter of the church of Rome. He was poſſeſſed of a conſiderable ſhare of learning and eloquence, but extremely rigid and uncharitable to all who had once been excommunicated by the Church. Whatever

* Vid. A work titled—Commentarii de rebus Chriſtianorum ante Conſtantinum Magnum.

penance ſuch had ſubmitted to, and whatever proofs of penitence they had given, the door of admittance was ſtill kept ſhut. Though they did not deny the poſſibility of ſalvation to them, and allowed that they might find an entrance into heaven, yet if they had fallen into any heinous ſins after baptiſm, they refuſed ſuch all acceſs to the communion of their church. With ſingular vanity and arrogance they aſſumed the boaſted title of *cathari*, as if purified from all the dregs of corruption, and would not receive into their ſociety any perſons whatever from the general body of Chriſtians, except they would ſubmit to be re-baptiſed.

We muſt not be ſurpriſed to find ſects and hereſies ſpringing up, even in the early periods of the Church. All the new converts to Chriſtianity, were at firſt compoſed of thoſe who were originally either Jews or Gentiles. Each were tinctured with the prejudices of their education, and of their native peculiar profeſſion. The generality did upon their converſion adopt the Chriſtian religion, in its genuine purity and ſimplicity. But there were not a few who affected innovation, who retained a fond attachment to ſome of their ancient notions and uſages; and men of genius and ambition, of a ſuperſtitious or enthuſiaſtical turn, made bold efforts to blend ſome of their old philoſophy and of their former religion with Chriſtianity. In every ſociety there are ſome men who may be miſled by miſtake, or of a deſigning temper, ſome warm and factious ſpirits, to whom the ordinary ſtream of life runs too ſmooth, and ſuch will always be fond to diſtinguiſh themſelves by peculiar novelties.

Even in theſe early times councils were ſometimes ſolemnly convened, particularly in the third century, at Rome, at Carthage, in Paleſtine, and

in

in various other places both in Aſia and Africa. Theſe were employed not only in regulating the affairs of religion in general, but alſo in a ſpecial manner to check the progreſs of ſchiſm and hereſy.

Eminent men likewiſe appeared, the fathers of the church, who entered the liſt, and combated the falſe opinions of heretical teachers. They endeavoured to reſcue the pure goſpel of Chriſt out of the hands of ſuch as would mingle or miſrepreſent it, and to guard and vindicate its ſacred doctrines.

In this important work they were preceded by the Apoſtles themſelves, particularly, Paul and John. Theſe perceived and detected ſeveral hereſies beginning to make head, and foretold the coming of Antichriſt in ſtill greater power and ſplendor, "with all deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs." We find the apoſtle Paul, on a variety of occaſions, cautioning Chriſtian converts againſt the ſeducing arts of deſigning and miſtaken men *. "Beware, (ſays he), leſt any man ſpoil you through "philoſophy, and vain deceit, after the tradition "of men, after the rudiments of the world, and "not after Chriſt."—"Let no man judge you in "meat or in drink, or in reſpect of an holy-day, "or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath."—"Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a "voluntary humility, and worſhipping of angels, "intruding into thoſe things, which he hath not "ſeen, vainly puft up by his fleſhly mind."—"Why are ye ſubject to ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men?"—"Which "things have indeed a ſhew of wiſdom in will-worſhip, and humility, and neglecting of the "body."

* Col. ii. 8. 16. 18. 20. 22, 23.

" body."— * " Neither give heed to fables and " endleſs genealogies, which miniſter queſtions, " rather than godly edifying which is in faith."— † " But avoid fooliſh queſtions and genealogies, " and contentions, and ſtrivings about the Law; " for they are unprofitable and vain. A man " that is an heretic, after the firſt and ſecond " admonition, reject." And, ſays the apoſtle John, ‡ " Beloved, believe not every ſpirit, but try " the ſpirits, whether they are of God: Becauſe " many falſe prophets are gone out into the " world. Hereby know ye the ſpirit of God: " Every ſpirit that confeſſeth that Jeſus Chriſt is " come in the fleſh, is of God. And every ſpirit " that confeſſeth not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in " the fleſh, is not of God: And this is that ſpirit " of Antichriſt, whereof you have heard, that it " ſhould come, and even now already is it in the " world." || How appoſite and ſtriking are theſe paſſages, and how deſcriptive of the Gnoſtic hereſies, whilſt at the ſame time they lay in proper antidotes, both againſt the impoſitions of Judaizing teachers, and the artifices of Pagan philoſophers?

The apoſtolic and primitive fathers of the Church followed their illuſtrious leaders with zeal and fortitude, and ſtood forth eminent champions for the Chriſtian Faith.

Need I mention the ** holy HERMAS, who wrote a

* 1 Tim. i. 4. † Tit. iii. 9, 10.

‡ 1 John iv. 1, 2, 3.

|| Vid. alſo 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12.

** With reſpect to Hermas, I follow Dupin, not Moſheim, though, I confeſs, with ſome heſitation. My own opinion is, That *Hermas* cotemporary and companion of St. Paul, and who is mentioned by him in Rom. xvi. 14, was the author of ſome pieces now loſt: That another Hermas, who lived in the ſecond century, and was a brother of *Pius* biſhop of Rome,

a treatiſe entitled, *The Paſtor*, which was in high eſteem among the ancients? Next to him is *Clemens* biſhop of Rome, a man of great reputation, who wrote two epiſtles to the Corinthians in the Greek language. Among the Chriſtian doctors who had perſonally converſed with the Apoſtles and their diſciples, we may alſo name Ignatius biſhop of Antioch. Several epiſtles ſtill extant are attributed to him, though ſeveral doubts have been entertained, concerning the authenticity of ſome of them. This venerable father was familiarly acquainted with our Lord's diſciples; * and ſuch was his diſtinguiſhed piety and zeal, that he was marked out a victim in the reign of the emperor *Trajan*, by whoſe order he was expoſed to the fury of wild beaſts in the public theatre at Rome. *Polycarp* biſhop of Smyrna, was a diſciple of St. John, a man of eminent ſanctity. He is generally allowed to be the author of an epiſtle to the Philippians. His age was lengthened out till about the middle of the ſecond century, when he ſuffered martyrdom with conſtancy and triumph.

St. Juſtin was the ſon of Priſcus Bachius, a Greek by birth and religion. He was greatly diſtinguiſhed both for his learning and piety. When he became a Chriſtian, he ſtill continued his profeſſion of philoſophy, and wore the habit, converting his talents and accompliſhments into the channel of true religion. He compoſed two admirable apologies for the Chriſtians when under perſecution, about the year 150, and preſented the firſt to the

Rome, publiſhed ſome things which are ſtill extant: He being a viſionary writer, advanced certain notions agreeable to many at that time; and his admirers aſcribed this man's productions to the true or apoſtolic Hermas, with a view to give them the greater dignity and authority.

* Tillemont's memoires, pour ſervir á l'hiſtoire de l'equiſe, tom. 2. p. 42.

the emperor Antoninus Pius, and the other to his ſucceſſor in the empire, Marcus Antoninus the philoſopher. He himſelf at laſt ſuffered as a martyr, in the glorious cauſe of Chriſtianity. Beſides his apologies, he has left behind him an excellent dialogue with Tryphon the Jew, in which he endeavours to refute the infidelity of the Jews, and to prove, from their own Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, the truth and certainty of the Chriſtian Religion.

Papias biſhop of Hierapolis, and diſciple to John the Evangeliſt, publiſhed an hiſtorical performance, a few fragments of which only remain. He was among the firſt who advanced the notion of a Millenium, being of opinion that, prior to the general diſſolution of the world, Jeſus Chriſt was to appear on earth, and there to reign with his ſaints in great glory, for the ſpace of a thouſand years. The Millenarians build their doctrine on ſeveral paſſages in Scripture, particularly Rev. ch. xx. and it gained ground during the three firſt centuries. Quadratus a Roman ſenator, and Ariſtides an Athenian philoſopher, wrote and preſented apologies for the Chriſtians, to the emperor Adrian; but they are unfortunately loſt. Hegeſippus publiſhed an eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, from the Apoſtles days to his own time, about the year 180, which has likewiſe periſhed, and nothing of it remains except ſome ſpecimens preſerved by Euſebius.

Irenæus biſhop of Lyons, was by birth a Greek, but had the happineſs to be from his infancy a diſciple of St Polycarp. He was zealous in rectifying the miſtakes of ſome of the primitive Chriſtians, and ſtudious to ſtop the progreſs of error. He therefore compoſed five books againſt hereſies. The Greek original is loſt, but there remains an ancient Latin tranſlation of them, deſervedly eſteemed

ſteemed a precious monument of antiquity. During the cruel perſecution raiſed under the reign of Severus, when vaſt numbers of Chriſtians were barbarouſly uſed, he alſo died a martyr, about the year of Chriſt 203.

Tatian a diſciple of St. Juſtin, wrote a diſcourſe againſt the Gentiles. *Athenagoras* an Athenian philoſopher publiſhed an apology for the Chriſtians, in the time of Marcus Aurelius, alſo an admirable treatiſe upon the reſurrection. *Theophilus* biſhop of Antioch, is author of three books in defence of Chriſtianity. Clemens, the diſciple of Pantænus at Alexandria, was a man of profound erudition. He flouriſhed in the reigns of *Severus* and *Caracalla*, till about *A. D.* 220. He compoſed a variety of treatiſes, of which there are only three that have eſcaped the ſhipwreck of time. Theſe are his Stromata, Pedagogue, and Exhortation. The firſt is of a miſcellaneous nature, the ſecond contains a ſyſtem of morality, and the laſt is an addreſs to the Gentiles, with a view to convert them from Paganiſm to the Chriſtian Faith.

Tertullian was one of the Latin fathers, a man of genius and learning, but of warm imagination, and auſtere in his notions. This made him adopt the conceits of Montanus, whilſt he himſelf wrote againſt other heretics. He was of the city of Carthage, and his father was proconſul in Africa. Favoured with a liberal education, poſſeſſing good natural talents, and zealous in the cauſe of religion, he exerted himſelf in writing a great many books, in which however there is a mixture of good and bad as to certain ſentiments, whilſt all admire his imagination and eloquence.

Cyprian, another Latin writer, was biſhop of Carthage. He ſucceeded Donatus in the year 248, and during the perſecution under Decius, he was be-

beheaded in the year 258. He held ſeveral councils upon the affairs of the church, was deeply engaged in a controverſy about the baptiſm of heretics, and publiſhed a great variety of letters, as alſo treatiſes on ſeveral ſubjects, which breathe a high ſpirit of devotion, and ſome of them are maſterpieces of learning and eloquence.

I might alſo mention *Minucius Felix*, Arnobius the African, and Dionyſius biſhop of Alexandria, the ſmall remains of whoſe writings prove ſpecimens of their capacity, knowledge, and taſte.

Origen is juſtly celebrated as a perſon of diſtinguiſhed abilities, of extenſive learning, and of wonderful induſtry. His numerous and laborious works, which are to this time preſerved, attract our admiration, though it muſt be owned, he was too much enamoured with the charms of the Platonic philoſophy. This tinctures many of his writings: his diſciples drank deep of this fountain; and they, overleaping the boundaries which their maſter had obſerved, ran extravagant lengths, and introduced the ſcholaſtic divinity. Thus, inſtead of contemplating Chriſtianity in its native excellence and ſimplicity, philoſophy and ſubtile metaphyſics were conjoined with it, and a wide door was flung open for the mere deductions of reaſon, and the inventions of fertile imagination.

I would now obſerve, though in a tranſient manner, that beſides the rapid progreſs of the goſpel during the firſt century, the limits of the Chriſtian Church were greatly enlarged in the ſecond and third centuries. Notwithſtanding the various perſecutions raiſed againſt the Chriſtians, yet there were conſiderable intervals of time between ſome of them, which proved a breathing period, and allowed the church to revive its ſpirits, and recover its ſtrength. Some of the Roman

man emperors, particularly Trajan and the Antonines, were naturally humane, and the execution of their edicts againſt the Chriſtians was partly relaxed, and ſometimes ſuſpended. The zeal and faith of the primitive profeſſors of the goſpel made them ſurmount all difficulties, and divine providence remarkably proſpered that heavenly religion which was planted by the Son of God. * Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory informs us, that now the glorious light of the goſpel was ſpread almoſt throughout the whole Eaſt, in Armenia, Perſia, and India; as alſo among the Germans, the Spaniards, the Celts, the Brittons, and many other nations in different parts of the world, particularly the Dacians, Scythians, and Getulians. Churches multiplied to a great degree in Europe, particularly in Gaul, and it is thought by ſome that Scotland was converted to the Chriſtian faith in the third century. The pious labours of the primitive fathers very much contributed to propagate Chriſtianity, but in a principal manner, their care to diſperſe abroad various, eſpecially Greek and Latin tranſlations of the Holy Bible. That which bore the name of the Italic was generally preferred, and was followed by the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Egyptian verſions.

It may not perhaps be improper to remark, that about the middle of the ſecond century, the external polity of the Church began to aſſume a new face. Hitherto the form of eccleſiaſtical government was extremely ſimple: Different churches were ſo many independent ſocieties, generally governed by their own particular biſhops or preſbyters. When theſe multiplied, and grew to importance and ſtability, they conceived more extenſive views, and opened a friendly correſpondence among themſelves, in order to promote the general inte-

* Tertullian, Adv. Judæos, cap. 7, p. 212.

reſts of the common cauſe. They judged it proper to aſſemble together in a ſolemn manner, in certain places, and at ſtated times. The ſeveral churches of a province aſſociated together, and formed one great eccleſiaſtical body. The confederacy of independent ſtates in Greece might ſuggeſt this meaſure as proper, and a variety of circumſtances did afterwards concur to fix the continuance of them as expedient. Theſe aſſemblies of deputies from different churches, were called among the Greeks, *ſynods*, and by the Latins, *councils*. The laws which were enacted at theſe general meetings, either provincial or national, were of general obligation, and obtained the title of Canons, or eccleſiaſtical rules. Afterwards, general councils, called Æcumenical, were ſometimes conveened upon important occaſions. Theſe were compoſed of delegates from churches in different kingdoms and countries, and met under the ſanction of their reſpective ſovereigns. This, however, gave riſe to that eccleſiaſtical power and pre-eminence uſurped by the Prelatical order. In proceſs of time, Metropolitans and Patriarchs were inſtituted; and at laſt the Biſhop of Rome was declared Prince of the Patriarchs, and inveſted with a ſpiritual ſupremacy, whilſt the councils extended their powers and privileges, and regulated for the whole church, the ſtandards of faith, manners, and polity. About this time alſo the clergy began to propagate the opinion, that the Chriſtian prieſthood was come in room of the Jewiſh, which was aboliſhed, and that therefore they were entitled to the like honours, immunities, and advantages *. This notion gradually gained ground, eſpecially after the ſecond deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and proved in time, a fruitful ſource

* Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. Eng. vol. I. p. 146.

ſource of opulence and dignity to the ſacerdotal order.

But we muſt now divert a little to a different object, and ſurvey ſome ſcenes of a moving, but intereſting nature.

During the three firſt centuries, Chriſtianity was not only unſupported by the civil powers, but made its way and ſpread through the world in oppoſition to them. This, however, was effected, not by intrigue or ſtratagem, not by working on the ſuperſtition of a credulous multitude, nor by any methods of violence, but by the gentle arts of perſuaſion, by addreſſing the reaſon and ingenuity of mankind, by diſplaying before the eyes of the world the native excellency of the goſpel, and through a divine power and bleſſing accompanying it. The primitive Chriſtians were inſpired with a ſublime and lively faith, with ardent zeal, and heroic fortitude, and this rendered them ſuperior to trials and temptations, and to all the ſtorms and tempeſts of perſecution which were raiſed againſt them.

Even Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, the great founder of our faith, the Son of God, and Saviour of mankind, was perſecuted and put to death by a deceived and malicious world. The exalted ſanctity, and unblemiſhed integrity of his followers, could not preſerve them from ſharing the ſame fate. Great numbers of them fell a ſacrifice to the rage and cruelty of barbarous and tyrannical men. The Jews, to whom the goſpel was firſt preached, moved with envy, inſtigated by malice and infidelity, raiſed a violent perſecution againſt the Chriſtians. They ſtoned to death *Stephen* the firſt illuſtrious martyr, they cut off with the ſword James the ſon of Zebedee, alſo James the juſt, biſhop of Jeruſalem, and, with hoſtile intent, they gave commiſſion to many, to go into ſtrange cities, and to diſtant pro-

provinces, in order to apprehend and puniſh, or bring bound to Jeruſalem all who believed in the name of the Lord Jeſus.—The enmity of the heathen nations againſt the Chriſtian religion was no ways inferior, and they were armed with more extenſive powers. It is commonly reckoned that the Chriſtians ſuſtained the ſhock of ten perſecutions under the Roman emperors, from the time of Nero in the year 64, to that under Diocleſian, *A. D.* 303, incluſive.

Nero was the firſt emperor who iſſued edicts and enacted laws againſt the Chriſtians, in which he was followed by ſeveral ſucceeding princes. He was a wicked and lawleſs tyrant, and delighted ſo much in cruelty, that he wiſhed the Roman people had but one head, that he might cut it off at one ſtroke. He himſelf was ſuſpected of ſetting fire to Rome, and he was ſo baſe as to throw the odium of it upon the innocent Chriſtians. They ſuffered every ſpecies of miſery, during the remainder of his reign, which continued till the year 68. Some of them were wrapt up in garments of combuſtible materials, which were ſet on fire; others were crucified, or expoſed as public ſpectacles to the dreadful fury of wild beaſts. Among the reſt, it is generally believed that St. Paul and St. Peter ſuffered martyrdom at Rome, ſealing with their blood that divine religion, which with zeal and intrepidity they had preached and propagated in the world.

The Chriſtains enjoyed an interval of reſt, during the civil wars betwixt Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and under the reigns of Veſpaſian and Titus.

But, about the year 94, the flames of perſecution broke out a-new, under Domitian, who reſembled Nero in all kinds of vice. Flavius Clemens, a perſon of conſular dignity, and Flavia Domitilla, a lady nearly related to him, were cut off by martyrdom;

tyrdom; and the holy Apoſtle John was then baniſhed to the iſle of Patmos, where he penned that myſterious book the Apocalypſe. Tertullian ſays, that this venerable man was, ſometime prior to this, thrown into a veſſel of boiling oil, but that he was miraculouſly preſerved, and came out unhurt.

Though Trajan was a prince poſſeſſed of many amiable qualities, yet did the Chriſtians ſuffer very conſiderably during his reign. He indeed wrote to Pliny the younger *, Proconſul in Bithynia, and gave orders, that the Chriſtians ſhould not be officiouſly ſought after; at ſame time, he allowed them to be put to death, if accuſed and convicted of adhering pertinaciouſly to their religion.

Ignatius biſhop of Antioch, was condemned by the emperor himſelf, in the year 107; and the aged, venerable Simeon, biſhop of Jeruſalem, was put to the torture and crucified, when he was 120 years old. The perſecution continued in the reign of Adrian, and was carried on, particularly in Aſia, with unuſual violence. Serenus Granianus the Proconſul, a man of a juſt and humane character, repreſented to the emperor the impropriety of ſuch barbarous proceedings againſt a ſet of men, who were good and uſeful ſubjects, and who were chargeable with no crime. Quadratus and Ariſtides preſented apologies in favour of the Chriſtians. The reſult was, that the emperor iſſued an edict, prohibiting for the future, that any Chriſtians ſhould be put to death, except convicted of rebelling againſt the laws, allowing them the privilege of being tried in a fair judicial form, and ordaining that their falſe accuſers ſhould be puniſhed. This produced a happy effect favourable to the Church.

Antoninus Pius appears to have been well diſpoſed towards the Chriſtians. Yet they were ſtill expoſed, in certain places of the empire, to the cruelty of

* Plin. Epiſt. lib. 10. Ep. 97, 98.

of a ſuperſtitious populace, and to the malice of Pagan prieſts. This produced an admirable apology, drawn by Juſtin Martyr, which he preſented to the emperor. In conſequence of this, and rather judging favourably of the Chriſtian religion, he publiſhed an imperial edict, denouncing capital puniſhment on any who ſhould falſely accuſe the Chriſtians. The concluſion of it runs thus,—*—If any ſhall, for the time to come, moleſt the Chriſtians, and falſely accuſe them on account of their religion, let the perſon thus accuſed be acquitted, though it ſhould appear that he is a Chriſtian, and let the accuſer be puniſhed with rigour of law.

Marcus Aurelius, who ſucceeded to the empire, did for ſome time look with an auſpicious eye upon the Chriſtians. Afterwards, miſled by the bad advice of deſigning courtiers, urged on by the miſrepreſentations of heathen magiſtrates, and the ſollicitations of ſuperſtitious people, he gave up this valuable body of men, to be harraſſed by their implacable enemies. They did not fail to exerciſe the moſt deſpotic tyranny, but treated ſuch who bore the Chriſtian name in a very injurious and mercileſs manner. The excellent apologies drawn in their behalf by Athenagoras, Tatian, and Juſtin Martyr, did not produce at this time the deſired effect, † ſo that great numbers fell a ſacrifice, and among others, Juſtin Martyr himſelf, and the holy Polycarp, biſhop of Smyrna, as alſo Pothinus biſhop of Lyons. Such proceedings, which breathe ſo high a ſpirit of injuſtice and inhumanity, muſt ſtain the character, and tarniſh the adminiſtration of Marcus Aurelius, however celebrated by ſome for perſonal virtue and wiſdom in other reſpects.

In

* Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 4. cap. 13.

† Fox's Martyrology, vol. 1.

In the reign of Commodus, the Chriſtian Church enjoyed ſome reſpite, but a cruel perſecution aroſe under Severus about the year 200. This emperor publiſhed an edict in the 10th year of his reign, ſtrictly prohibiting, under the ſevereſt penalties, all perſons whatever to become Jews or Chriſtians. This furniſhed a pretext for perſecuting the latter in a particular manner. This was accordingly done through moſt countries of Europe, and with ſignal violence in Africa. Many perſons of great rank and eminence, were brought from Egypt and other places to Alexandria, where they ſuffered nobly in the cauſe of Chriſtianity. In Gaul, Irenæus was put to death at Lyons; and there was beſides, a general maſſacre of all the Chriſtians in that city, ſo that the blood of holy Martyrs was to be ſeen flowing on all ſides.

When Maximinus roſe to the empire, he ſoon diſcovered himſelf unfavourable to the Church. He firſt began his oppoſition by publiſhing edicts againſt the biſhops and prieſts, but ſoon thereafter the whole body of believers was perſecuted. This continued for three years, during which time, ſeveral Chriſtian temples were demoliſhed, that had been erected in the time of Alexander Severus.

In the year 249, Decius Trajan aſcended the imperial throne. He ſoon ſet on foot a dreadful perſecution againſt the church of Chriſt. By bloody edicts he commanded the Prætors and Proconſuls, upon pain of death, to do every thing in their power to extirpate the Chriſtian religion, and to compel thoſe who had embraced it to return to idolatry. It is not eaſy to conceive the conſternation which would ſeize the Chriſtians, upon ſo alarming a proſpect. They were attacked in every quarter with ſavage and unrelenting fury. From Rome the perſecution paſſed into all the provinces

of

of the empire, particularly Aſia, and Egypt. Great multitudes ſuffered the moſt infernal torments, which ingenious cruelty could invent, and with invincible fortitude, and by triumphant faith roſe in a glorious manner ſuperior to them. But at ſame time, there were too many, who, ſtruck with terror at the proſpect of thoſe horrible tortures which were preparing for them, made ſhipwreck of their profeſſion, and fell into apoſtacy. Some of them were fatally prevailed on, to offer ſacrifice, and burn incenſe before the images of heathen deities, or to procure certificates from the Pagan prieſts of their having done ſo. This lamentable defection among ſo many Chriſtians, was the occaſion of much diſturbance and warm conteſts ſome time thereafter: When peaceable times returned, theſe apoſtates were deſirous of returning into the communion of the Church; but the terms of their admiſſion were not eaſy to be adjuſted. Whilſt ſome were diſpoſed to ſhew an exceſs of indulgence and to ſtretch to the utmoſt the point of charity, others held out with inflexible ſeverity, and inſiſted on all the rigour of eccleſiaſtical diſcipline.

Under *Gallus* and *Voluſianus*, the perſecution againſt the Chriſtians did not ceaſe. Some were exiled from their native country, and ſuffered extreme hardſhips, whilſt others were cruelly condemned to death. At ſame time they were involved in the common calamity of a dreadful peſtilence, which then broke out and raged with violence through many provinces of the Roman empire.

When *Valerian* mounted the throne, he looked with a ſmiling aſpect upon the Church, for a few years, he even proved a patron of the Chriſtians, and treated them with kindneſs and friendſhip. * He did

* Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 7, cap. 9.

did them good offices on a variety of occaſions, they had free acceſs to his perſon, found a ſanctuary under his protection, and his court appeared like a little Chriſtian Church. But this promiſing ſcene ſoon evaniſhed; a diſmal day of gloom and terror quickly ſucceeded a morning of joy and ſun-ſhine. The Emperor was unhappily ſeduced by Macrinus, a magician of Egypt, who wrought himſelf into high favour, and directed all the councils at Rome. He took every method to perſuade *Valerian*, that the only way to procure proſperity for the empire, was to re-eſtabliſh Gentile idolatry in its full extent, and totally to ſuppreſs Chriſtianity. Upon this, bloody edicts were iſſued out, about the year 257, not only prohibiting all Chriſtian aſſemblies, but ordering biſhops, prieſts, and deacons to be put to death, and that magiſtrates making profeſſion of the Goſpel ſhould ſhare the ſame fate. At laſt the perſecution became general, ſo that neither rank, nor ſex, nor age could prove a protection from thoſe ſanguinary laws which were now enacted. Cyprian, in an elegant and pathetic manner, bewails thoſe fearful ſufferings which the Chriſtians then underwent, and he himſelf was beheaded at Carthage, whilſt Xiſtus, biſhop of Rome, fell a victim there. And at one time, there were no leſs than three hundred martyrs, who rather than offer ſacrifice to heathen gods, and renounce Chriſt, leaped into a horrible pit of burning lime, which had been on purpoſe kindled for the tragical occaſion, and were ſcorched and ſtifled, and at laſt conſumed in the flames. As if divine Providence meant to puniſh in an exemplary manner the wicked perſecutor, the northern nations, a fierce and warlike people, did then begin to make irruptions into the empire, and ſometime after, Valerian himſelf was made priſoner by *Sapor* king of Perſia.

ſia. He was then ſubjected to every poſſible hardſhip, and treated in the moſt ignominious manner, as if a ſlave, and not an emperor. The monarch of Perſia made him baſely ſtoop, and ſet his foot upon him when he mounted on horſeback. He kept him for ſome years a miſerable captive, at laſt cauſed him to be ſkinned alive, and rubbed with ſalt. Thus periſhed the Roman emperor, after having been guilty of a thouſand barbarities againſt the innocent Chriſtians!

In ſeveral ſucceſſive reigns, under Gallienus, Claudius, Probus, Carus, and Numerian, the Church of Chriſt enjoyed a long lucid interval. This continued with very little interruption almoſt 42 years. At laſt a dreadful ſtorm aroſe, big with terror and trembling, which ſeemed to threaten the entire deſtruction of the Chriſtian name.

Dioclefian was declared emperor in the year 284, and he aſſumed into a ſhare of the government Maximinus Herculeus in the year 286. As theſe two emperors were diſturbed with frequent revolts of their ſubjects in different provinces, they thought proper to elect Conſtantius Chlorus, and Maximinus Galerius, whom they honoured with the name of Cæſars, whilſt they themſelves retained that of Auguſtus, as colleagues in the empire and ſuperior to them. Diocleſian did not at firſt betray any innate averſion to the Chriſtians. But urged by the reſtleſs importunity of Galerius his own ſon-in-law, and too credulous of the miſrepreſentations given of the Chriſtians as acceſſary to ſetting on fire the imperial palace in Nicomedia, and as engaged in ſome ſeditions which had happened in Armenia and Syria; yet, though in fact theſe were malicious aſperſions, he at laſt publiſhed the moſt terrible edicts againſt the Chriſtians. He firſt attacked the miniſters of Religion. He next degraded

degraded perſons of illuſtrious extraction, or of eminent ſtation, and ordered them to be branded with a mark of infamy, if they would not abjure Chriſtianity. He afterwards proceeded to the higheſt pitch of barbarity, ſparing none of whatever denomination or character. Multitudes were thrown into priſon, others were baniſhed, and had their eſtates confiſcated, many were ſcourged to death, were torn in pieces by lions and tygers, were burnt, beheaded and crucified, whilſt ſome were doomed to a more lingering death, being roaſted at a gentle fire, or having melted lead poured into their bowels. * I might mention the tragical ſtory of the Thebean legion wholly conſiſting of Chriſtians, who are ſaid, firſt to have been decimated, and afterwards entirely deſtroyed, by order of Maximinus Galerius. This, it is ſaid, they calmly ſubmitted to, with their ſwords in their hands, rather than renounce Chriſt, and ſwear by the altars of heathen deities. But the fact, though aſſerted by ſome, is diſputed by others. † In Phrygia, a whole city compoſed of Chriſtian inhabitants, was conſumed by fire, the queſtor, magiſtrates, and all the people, men, women, and children. Euſebius himſelf lived at that time, and was an eye-witneſs to the moſt ſhocking ſcenes of barbarity and blood, which the Chriſtians however nobly underwent, with a triumph of faith and fortitude, which reflected the higheſt honour upon themſelves, gave a luſtre and dignity to their religion, and beſpoke the remarkable preſence and ſupport of the Almighty.

Of all the horrid perſecutions raiſed againſt the Chriſtians, this under Diocleſian may be juſtly reckoned

* Euſeb. hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 8. cap. 9.

† —— lib. 8. cap. 13.

reckoned the moſt ſevere and formidable. It raged for ten long years, and even reached to Great Britain. * The moſt ancient Britiſh hiſtorian ſays, That the Churches were demoliſhed, that all the books of holy Scripture wherever they could be found, were burnt, and that great numbers both of the prieſts and people, were ſlaughtered as ſheep.

Monſieur Godeau affirms, that in this perſecution, there were ſometimes no leſs than 17,000 martyrs killed in the ſpace of one month. And he reckons, that during the continuance of it, there were in the province of Egypt 144,000 perſons who died by the violence of their inhuman perſecutors, beſides 700,000 more, moſt of whom periſhed by a premature death, through the hardſhips of baniſhment, and by being condemned as ſlaves to the public works.

Theſe are mournful, tragical ſcenes, which cannot fail to excite in the mind, the ſtrongeſt ſentiments of compaſſion and wonder. We ſympathize with the ſuffering martyr, although we know, that he is juſt now ſhining in robes of glory and immortality: We are ſhocked at the brutality of ſavage men, who could ſo often embrue their hands in the blood of their brethren. Perhaps we wonder at the permiſſions of Providence, which could ſo long tolerate ſuch ſcenes of cruelty and confuſion, and that the juſtice of Heaven did not appear armed with thunderbolts of vengeance, againſt the unrelenting enemies of God and goodneſs †. But let us not dare, raſhly to arraign the plans or procedures of Providence, which always ſteers an invariable courſe of wiſdom and rectitude, even amidſt all the clouds and hurricanes which

* Gildas, de excidio Britanniæ.

† Vid. Rev. vi. 9, 10, 11.

which may infeſt our lower world. Let us admire the energy of that Divine Religion, which could inſpire its votaries with ſuch heroic magnanimity, as to make them deſpiſe death in its moſt frightful forms, ſmile at the ſight and force of flames, * and croud with holy haſte to the tribunals of Pagan judges, there to avow their fidelity to their God and Saviour, and court the crown of Martyrdom. Let us mark with wonder thoſe gracious and aſtoniſhing aſſiſtances ſo frequently vouchſafed to the ſaints, and confeſſors, and martyrs in primitive times, by which they were enabled, in ſo ſtriking a manner to ſeal and confirm the truth of Chriſtianity. And let us admire the miraculous preſervation of the Church of Chriſt, amidſt thoſe perilous times, ſo full of danger, difficulty, and diſtreſs, till it riſes ſuperior to all oppoſition, and becomes moſt glorioufly triumphant. For true it is, that the blood of the martyrs has been the ſeed of the Church, and contributed, by the bleſſing of the Almighty, to ſpread the conqueſts of the Goſpel far and near through the world. And perſecution, however awful, and though wholly unjuſtifiable, has yet proved the means of releaſing the priſoners of hope, from their captivity in mortal fleſh, and of wafting in an earlier period and by a ſpeedier flight, an immenſe multitude of immortal ſouls, from theſe duſky and tempeſtuous regions here below, to the ſerene ſhores of everlaſting reſt and joy in heaven.

The unblemiſhed integrity, the exalted ſanctity of the primitive martyrs, the devotion of their dying moments, and the dignity with which they ſuffered, made a deep impreſſion upon the minds o men. This ſerved to call in attention, to command veneration, to excite enquiry, and at laſt to perſuade

* Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 8. cap. 12.

perſuade the world, that ſuch dreadful evils would not be calmly endured by the Chriſtians, without a ſerious conviction of their acting a wiſe and worthy part, that ſuch invincible patience could not be diſplayed without Divine aſſiſtance, and that truth behoved to be the foundation of the whole. They ſaw, not a few, but vaſt multitudes of every rank, and age, and ſex, in various kingdoms and provinces, united in one faith, reſolute in their profeſſion, reſigning all the advantages of life, and falling a chearful ſacrifice to death, rather than renounce that religion which they had embraced. They thereupon concluded that it muſt be Divine, and that it was well and firmly founded, * when inſtead of being ſhattered by perſecutions and injuries, it rather increaſed, and became more ſtable and reſpectable. For the Goſpel, from the time of its firſt publication, was always gaining ground, and multiplied its trophies in a ſurpriſing manner. In the very firſt century, Chriſtian churches were eſtabliſhed in moſt of the provinces of Italy, Egypt, the Eaſt, and Africa. In the ſecond, there were many founded in Aſia, and Gaul. And the number of Chriſtians grew ſo prodigiouſly in the third century, that almoſt one half of the Roman empire had gone over to the Chriſtian Faith.

In one view, it may indeed ſeem ſtrange, how it came to paſs, that the Chriſtian Religion was perſecuted with ſo much rancour and cruelty, eſpecially as the Romans gave a toleration to the nations whom they conquered, to retain their religious opinions and uſages. Conſidering the innocence and benevolence of Chriſtians, not only the inoffenſive ſimplicity of their lives, but the agreeable aſpect of their profeſſion upon civil government,

* Lactant. de juſtitia, lib. 5. cap. 13.

vernment, and how admirably conducive their Religion was, to promote the happineſs of individuals, and the general welfare of human ſociety, one would be apt to imagine that Chriſtianity would have met with a leſs unfavourable fate, yea, even with an honourable reception in the world. But in making an eſtimate of human affairs, we muſt always make large allowances for the paſſions, the prejudices, and intereſts of mankind. Theſe will often warp them aſide, both from the principles of reaſon, and the path of duty. Beſides, it muſt be remembred, that Chriſtianity ſtood directly oppoſite to all the falſe religions of the heathen world, ſtrongly condemned their idolatry, and all their ſuperſtitious ceremonies, prohibited ſome of their moſt favourite paſſions and practices, and enjoined a belief of its own doctrines, and a compliance with its laws, under the ſanction of moſt awful penalties. All this ran counter to the corruption of human nature, and the prevailing wickedneſs of the world. Innovations in religion are generally diſliked, and a reformation is too frequently oppoſed. The Chriſtians were bound by their principles, not merely to exerciſe their Religion in private, but to ſpread and propagate it through the world, to point out the impiety of Paganiſm, and the abſurdities of Heathen worſhip, to make proſelytes, and plant churches wherever they could. This excited a groupe of inveterate paſſions, envy, ſuſpicion, malice, reſentment. Among all the Heathen nations, one may venture to ſay, there was a kind of community of religion. All was founded on the ſame falſe, deluſive principles, though diverſified by ſome particular modes or circumſtances. All were ignorant of the true God, and of the only Mediator between God and man, and all worſhipped idol-

vanities,

vanities, the fictions of their own imaginations, or the devices of their own hands. Hence it was, that the Romans found no great difficulty in introducing into the provinces they conquered ſome of their native gods; neither were they ſcrupulous of receiving from them ſome ceremonies of ſuperſtition, which appeared with an air of novelty and grandeur.

But the Chriſtian Religion ſtood ſingle and alone. It attacked the will-worſhip of the Jews, and the idolatry of the Gentiles; it directed its efforts againſt the eſtabliſhed religion of the empire. The Romans beheld the increaſing numbers of Chriſtians with jealouſy, and might ſuſpect that ſo numerous and ſo reſpectable a body, would not only overturn the old, and ſubſtitute a new religion, but uſurp the reins of government into their hands.

Deſigning or malicious men were not wanting to augment ſuch fears, and to cheriſh the ſeeds of ſuſpicion and prejudice againſt the Chriſtians. Artful inſinuations, groundleſs aſperſions were thrown out againſt them, as enemies to Cæſar, as engaged in civil commotions, as devoid of all religion, becauſe of the unadorned ſimplicity of their worſhip, which had nothing external or glaring, to attract the eye. Heathen philoſophers ſought to diſplay their wit and learning againſt a ſyſtem, which pretended to be much more ſublime than any they had taught. The whole tribe of Pagan prieſts and augurs roſe as one man to oppoſe the progreſs of the Goſpel. The credit of their profeſſion and of their religion began to totter. The craft of many who miniſtred to the Heathen temples was in danger. And the unthinking, undiſcerning multitude, would join in a popular cry, againſt thoſe men, who inſulted,

as

as they would ſay, the gods of their country, and the uſages of their anceſtors, and would preſcribe to them unheard-of objects and methods of worſhip.—Thus perſecution aroſe and was fomented, till Divine truth, and invincible patience, prevailed and triumphed.



PART II.

WE now arrive at a more ſerene and ſhining period of the Chriſtian Church, under the auſpicious reign of CONSTANTINE the Great, the firſt Chriſtian Emperor.

The learned Spankeim reckons that he was born at Naiſſa, on the 27th of February, *A. D.* 272.

He was ſon of Conſtantius Chlorus, who favoured the Chriſtians more than any of his colleagues in the empire. His father died in England the 25th of July, 306, by whoſe will he ſucceeded as emperor in the Weſt. He reſided the firſt ſix years of his reign in Gaul; afterwards, being informed of the intolerable outrages committed by *Maxentius*, ſon of Maximianus Herculeus, who was made emperor at Rome, and being ſollicited by an embaſſy from the Senate and people, he formed a reſolution to deliver the city from the tyranny of that uſurper.

When he engaged in this arduous undertaking, he began to meditate of ſome aſſiſtance beyond the mere ſtrength and courage of his army. He reſolved therefore to lay aſide the vulgar deities, and the rites of Heatheniſh ſuperſtition. He came to a determination of adhering ſtedfaſtly to the one only and true God, whom his father had acknowledged, and which diſpoſed him to protect the Chriſtians,

Chriſtians, even in his own palace. In this noble deſign he was greatly encouraged by his pious mother Helena, who was aſſiduous to infuſe into him ſentiments favourable to Religion.

To this one God he addreſſed himſelf in a devout manner, earneſtly intreating that he would be pleaſed to make himſelf known to him. Heaven graciouſly heard his prayer, and anſwered it in a miraculous manner. * Euſebius, who relates the affair, owns it would have been incredible, if he had not heard it from the mouth of Conſtantine himſelf, who confirmed it with an oath.

When the army was upon a march, and the emperor wrapt up in profound thought, there appeared, juſt as the ſun was declining, a pillar of light in the heavens, in the figure of a croſs, with this inſcription viſible upon it, τούτῳ νίκα,— by this overcome. † The emperor and whole army were ſtruck with amazement at the ſight of ſo extraordinary a phœnomenon. At night Chriſt appeared to him in a dream, with the croſs in his hand, which made an indelible impreſſion upon his mind: And from that time forward, Conſtantine the Great, always carried *a croſs*, as the imperial ſtandard before him, in all his wars, which Euſebius frequently ſaw.

Conſtantine, now advanced with a noble intrepidity to the very walls of Rome, at the head of an army conſiſting of 90,000 foot, and 8000 horſe. He encamped in a ſpacious plain before the city, and there waited the arrival of Maxentius, who ſoon appeared with a numerous body of forces, amounting

* Euſeb. de vita Conſtantini, lib. 1. cap. 28, *&c.*

† I am not ignorant that ſome diſpute has been raiſed about this matter, as to which, *vide* Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. tranſlated by Dr Maclain, vol. 1. p. 263, 264.

amounting to 170,000 foot, and 18,000 horſe. An engagement commenced, and a fierce and bloody battle was fought with unimaginable ardour. Victory for ſome time hovered with dubious wings, but at laſt reſted on the ſide of Conſtantine. That day he diſtinguiſhed himſelf with all the wiſdom and valour of an expert warrior, and animated his troops with the moſt ſanguine hopes of ſucceſs. The army of Maxentius was routed and diſperſed: He himſelf ſank into the river when retreating by a bridge of boats laid over the Tyber, which happened to give way by the great numbers which crowded upon it. His body was found, and his head ſtruck off, and carried on a pole before the conquering army. Conſtantine having thus gained a ſignal and compleat victory, made a glorious triumphant entry into the city of Rome, amidſt the loud acclamations of a joyful people, who hailed him as their illuſtrious deliverer. He there diſplayed the ſtandard of the Croſs, and erected a monument of gratitude to Almighty God *.

Having ſettled the great affairs of ſtate, Conſtantine began to declare more openly in favour of the Chriſtians.

The firſt edict upon record in their behalf, was that

* The Inſcription on the Monument is in Capitals as follows:---HOC. SALUTARI. SIGNO. VERACI. FORTITUDINIS. INDICIO. CIVITATEM. NOSTRAM. JUGO. TYRANNI. EREPTAM. LIBERAVI. DENIQUE. ET. SENATUM. ET. POPULUM. RO. LIBERATUM. PRISCO. SPLENDORI. ET. CLARITATI. RESTITUI. ----- Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. 9. cap. 9. Conſtantine's coins, extant at this day, are ſtamped with a Croſs on the reverſe.

that publiſhed at Milan, *A. D.* 312, wherein was granted a general toleration to all religions, but more eſpecially to the Chriſtians. Therein the Emperor prohibits any to diſturb them in their profeſſion or way of worſhip; and orders, that all their churches and revenues that had been taken away, ſhould be immediately reſtored, and that the purchaſers or poſſeſſors ſhould be repaid out of the treaſury.

Licinius however, Conſtantine's brother-in-law, having got the whole eaſtern empire under his command, threw off the maſk, and raiſed a hot perſecution againſt the Church. To puniſh his perfidy and inconſtancy, Conſtantine reſolved upon an expedition againſt him. He fought ſeveral bloody battles, in all which Conſtantine proved victorious; and which way ſoever the imperial ſtandard of the Croſs turned, the enemy fled before it.

At laſt Licinius retreated to Nicomedia, whither Conſtantine followed, and beſieged him. He was obliged to ſurrender; and was ſent to Theſſalonica, where, upon attempting to raiſe freſh diſturbances, he was put to death, *A. D.* 324.

Then it was that the government of the whole Roman empire devolved upon Conſtantine. He inſtantly reſtored tranquillity to the Church, and ſent orders and edicts to all the governors of his provinces, to recal the Chriſtians that were baniſhed; to releaſe thoſe who were under confinement; to reinſtate ſuch who had been thruſt out of their offices and eſtates, in their former places and poſſeſſions. He reſcinded all the ſevere laws and conſtitutions which ſtood againſt them; and as for ſuch who had ſuffered martyrdom, he commanded their goods and lands to be reſtored to thoſe who were next in kindred, or, where there were no relations, that

that theſe ſhould be appropriated to the uſe of the Church.

He alſo took care to promote Chriſtians to all public offices of truſt, in order the more effectually to ſecure the obſervancé of his imperial mandates, and to encourage the profeſſion of Chriſtianity.

He iſſued the ſtricteſt orders for the religious obſervation of the Lord's-day, requiring it to be ſolemnly ſet a-part for prayer and public worſhip, and all holy exerciſes. He himſelf, in conjunction with the great officers of ſtate, and the commanders of his army, ſet an example of public devotion. The Emperor likewiſe wrote a large pathetic epiſtle to the provincial governors of the eaſt, wherein, with conſummate wiſdom and piety, he warmly exhorts all his ſubjects to embrace the Chriſtian Religion.

Peace and tranquillity being thus reſtored to the world, Conſtantine the Great transferred the ſeat of the empire from Rome to Byzantium in Thracia, which he enlarged and beautified with all the grandeur and magnificence which art could contrive. He commanded, by law, that it ſhould be called New Rome; but, notwithſtanding this, it retains the honour of his name, and is called *Conſtantinople* to this day. This he finiſhed and dedicated *A. D.* 330.

He built many noble churches and oratories, both in city and country, and enriched and dignified the Chriſtian Church with great revenues and diſtinguiſhed honours. He tried, for a long time, to reclaim the Gentile world by perſuaſion and patience; he afterwards proceeded to root out idolatry by bolder meaſures, though ſtill averſe to every thing that could be properly conſtrued compulſion or cruelty. With this view, he ordered commiſſioners,

oners, appointed for that end, every where to open the Pagan temples, to throw up the doors of the reveſtries, ſo that the pretended myſteries which were repreſented as ſacred and venerable, and which hitherto none but the prieſts were allowed to behold, might now be publickly expoſed to the eye and deriſion of the vulgar. The Pagan prieſts and flamins, finding themſelves detected and abandoned, thought proper to ſubmit. With their own hands they brought furth their idols, dragged the images of their gods by ropes into the ſtreets, to be viewed and handled, and laughed at by the people; and the valuable ſtatues of gold and ſilver were melted down, and coined into money.

Conſtantine continued zealous in propagating the Goſpel of Chriſt far and near, and concerted the moſt effectual meaſures to render it univerſal. Whilſt he endeavoured to repreſs Gentile ſuperſtition, he gave all poſſible encouragement to the Chriſtians, repoſed confidence in them, and with great kindneſs entertained the Clergy at his own table. Providence ſmiled upon his religious endeavours. In his time Heathen idolatry was baniſhed out of all the principal cities, and remained only in ſome country villages, whence, in the Theodoſian Code, it is called *Paganiſm*; and Chriſtianity became the eſtabliſhed religion of the empire. Conſtantine himſelf ſpent moſt of his vacant time in prayer, reading the Scriptures, and other devout exerciſes. The Emperor, by the Majeſty of his example, formed the whole court to an imitation of him.

At laſt, this religious and magnanimous Prince died *A. D.* 338, in the 64th year of his age, and the 31ſt of his reign. His death was a ſignal loſs to the Chriſtian Church, and overwhelmed all good men with grief and lamentation *. Euſebius ſays of

* Euſeb. de Laudibus Conſtantini, cap. 9.

of this illuſtrious perſonage, that, armed with no other breaſt-plate but that of piety, and carrying no other banner except that of the Croſs, he triumphed over all his enemies, and all their idols.

He left behind him three ſons, among whom he divided the empire. He aſſigned to Conſtantine the eldeſt, Britain, Spain and Gaul. To Conſtantius the Second, he bequeathed Myſia, Thrace, the Eaſt, and Egypt. And Conſtans the youngeſt, obtained Italy, Macedonia, and Greece, with the provinces which bordered on the Euxine ſea, and thoſe parts of Africa which were ſubject to the Roman empire.

Conſtantine the Great, had, with a careful eye, watched over the education of theſe three princes: They proved all of them Chriſtians themſelves; and they continued to protect and cheriſh the religion of Jeſus.

The peace and proſperity of the Church, underwent a ſhort, but very dark eclipſe, under Julian the Apoſtate. Though educated a Chriſtian, yet when inveſted with the purple, he became a moſt malicious and inveterate enemy to Chriſtianity. He did not indeed publiſh imperial edicts againſt the Chriſtians, nor raiſe, in a direct or open manner, violent perſecutions againſt them, yet he employed every other method that could be deviſed, to aboliſh the Goſpel, and to reſtore Paganiſm. He himſelf profanely renounced his baptiſm, drew his pen, and diſplayed his wit and learning in defence of heatheniſm, and in oppoſition to the Chriſtian religion *. He ordered the Pagan temples to be ſet open; he built ſome, and repaired others. He cauſed alters to be erected to falſe deities, and he himſelf did publickly ſacrifice upon them, aſſuming

* Sozomen's Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 5. cap. 3.—Cave's Lives of the Fathers.

the title of Pontifex Maximus, and uſed continual endeavours to introduce the whole train of Gentile rites and ceremonies. He revoked the laws which had been made by Conſtantine the Great, againſt Pagan ſuperſtition, oppreſſed the Chriſtians on many various pretexts, and too much encouraged thoſe who diſtreſſed them. He allowed all ſects whatever, the free exerciſe of their religion, but ſhowed diſtinguiſhing favour to ſuch who profeſſed Paganiſm, whilſt he deprived Chriſtians of public employments and offices, and baniſhed them from his court. He diſcharged the latter from teaching the ſciences and the *Belles Lettres*, with a view to bring them into contempt; ſtripped the Clergy of thoſe immunities and privileges which had been conferred upon them, whilſt he protected the Jews, laviſhed immenſe ſums among them, and endeavoured to re-eſtabliſh them in their native land, from mere hatred of the Goſpel, and with a deſign to fruſtrate the famous prophecies of its illuſtrious Founder, as we have elſewhere noticed.

Providence was pleaſed graciouſly to interpoſe in behalf of his Church, by aſſigning to him the ſhort reign of only two years. Advancing with an army into Perſia, he was there defeated, and in the action received a mortal wound, of which he died on the 26th of June 363.

Jovian, who was thereupon declared Emperor, reſtored peace and ſafety to the Church. The Goſpel flouriſhed every where under the reigns of Theodoſius, and of his ſons, Arcadius and Honorius, whilſt Paganiſm was univerſally repreſſed, and was almoſt entirely deſtroyed throughout the whole Roman empire.

Chriſtian Emperors, animated with zeal for the welfare and proſperity of the Church, ſought every opportunity to load her with honours and riches.

The

The Clergy were allowed free and frequent acceſs to court, and promoted to patriarchial dignity and almoſt princely power. The Prelates, who roſe to the higheſt pitch of pre-eminence, were the Biſhops of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria. When the imperial reſidence was transferred to Conſtantinople, that See contended for a diſtinguiſhed ſhare of eccleſiaſtical dominion; and the Biſhop of Jeruſalem was held in high veneration, as that was the great Mother-church, and had been the illuſtrious ſeat of Divine Providence. Extenſive powers and privileges were annexed to theſe Sees, proportional diſtinctions and immunities were diſtributed among inferior dignitaries, and a general luſtre ſpread over the whole ſacerdotal order. They were no longer expoſed to the tyranny of perſecution, but baſked under the ſun-ſhine of imperial favour. To enter into the Church was the ſure road to preferment and wealth; and thoſe who were inveſted with the ſacred character, found it no difficult matter to maintain a commanding influence among thoſe over whom they preſided. Emperors themſelves raiſed the moſt magnificent temples, celebrated the dedication of them with all imaginable pomp and ſolemnity; and adorned theſe ſtately edifices with carving and imagery of exquiſite workmanſhip, with many curious pictures and ſtatues, not as objects of worſhip, but as mere decorations expreſſive of taſte and grandeur. Some of the Chriſtian Churches were erected over the tombs of the Martyrs, whoſe memories and burial-places were regarded with a kind of ſuperſtitious veneration. Pilgrimages were ſometimes undertaken to viſit the repoſitories of thoſe pious dead, and to tread the Holy Land ſo famous in ſacred ſtory. And many became ſo ſtrongly infected with ſuch falſe notions and ideas of things, as to imagine

imagine there was ſomething of real value and energy in all this, and brought large quantities of earth from *Paleſtine* and other places of ſuppoſed ſanctity, which were ſold at enormous prices, as having a ſecret virtue or an attendant bleſſing, which gave a ſecurity againſt the ſtratagems and malice of evil ſpirits *. A long train of external rites and ceremonies, borrowed from the Greeks and Romans, were, with ſome variation, introduced into the ſervice of the Church. The miniſters of religion too readily adopted a pompous ritual, and a ſplendour in worſhip. They themſelves affected to appear in rich and embroidered robes, and in a fine variety of veſtments appropriated for different offices and ſervices, with mitres, tiaras, and croſiers. Solemn proceſſions and luſtrations were encouraged, gold and ſilver vaſes were multiplied, and external pageantry was ſubſtituted in the room of real devotion.

† St Auguſtin himſelf complained, that even in his time, the yoke under which the Jews groaned was almoſt more tolerable than what was impoſed upon ſome Chriſtians. Many might perhaps pleaſe themſelves with the thought of preſerving the eſſentials of Chriſtianity, and of engaging the Heathens with more facility to embrace it, on account of condeſcenſions made to their ancient uſages. But they did not conſider, that by ſuch indulgencies and adulterations they ſpoiled the beautiful ſimplicity of the Goſpel, disfigured her native excellence, and cheriſhed that propenſity of corrupt nature to ſhew and oſtentation in religion, ſo remote from the genius and deſign of the Goſpel. Far leſs, perhaps, did they dream of the dreadful abuſe that would be made of ſuch innovations in proceſs of time, and

* Auguſtinus de civitate Dei, lib. 22. cap. 8.

† Auguſt. Ep. 119.

and that they were paving the way for the unbounded power and invention of the Roman Pontiffs, and for thoſe new tenets, and that vaſt multiplicity of rites and ceremonies which Popery eſtabliſhed, till Chriſtianity itſelf was almoſt overwhelmed, by a huge overgrown ſyſtem of ſuperſtition.

Whilſt religion itſelf was thus allowed to degenerate, it is leſs ſurpriſing, if the lives and manners of Chriſtians likewiſe declined from the ſtandard of primitive ſanctity. Many indeed adorned their Chriſtian profeſſion by unblemiſhed integrity of character, but there were others who became a reproach to it, by their irregular lives. Some of the Clergy, who ought to have ſhone forth patterns of piety and virtue, were actuated with pride and ambition, and abandoned themſelves to luxury and indolence; and multitudes of the laity were but nominal Chriſtians, whilſt they were ſtrangers to the power and ſpirit of the Goſpel. Chriſtianity was now become the public eſtabliſhed religion, and was no longer expoſed to the diſcriminating teſts and trials of perſecution; nay, the profeſſion of it proved ſubſervient to ſecular views and advantages. Profound peace and ſecurity prevailed; and true it is, that worldly proſperity miniſters too often to vice, abates the reliſh of religion, and proves prejudicial both to private and public virtue.

Amidſt the external tranquillity of the Church, various ſects and hereſies ſprang up within her own boſom. Men of ſpeculation and leiſure, who were ambitious of becoming heads of a party, who were of a factious or turbulent diſpoſition, and under the influence of a vain and warm imagination, were too ready to ſtart new notions, to affect a peculiar phraſeology, and pretend even to be wiſe above what is written.

We

We ſhall but tranſiently mention a few of the principal hereſies that appeared to diſturb the Church, within the period we are now conſidering.

The Donatiſts were the followers of thoſe errors which are aſcribed to Donatus biſhop of Carthage. They are ſaid to have maintained an inequality among the Perſons of the Trinity, aſſerting the Father to be above the Son, and the Son above the Holy Ghoſt, and to have denied the privilege of baptiſm to all but to their own particular ſect.

Thus they refuſed to acknowledge other Chriſtian churches, or hold any communion with them, and even conſidered them as excluded from ſalvation. Theſe ſchiſmatics prevailed chiefly in Africa, and there indeed multiplied to ſuch a degree as to have 400 biſhops preſiding in their churches. Neither were the weapons of their warfare of a merely polemical nature. When the Donatiſts were deprived of their churches, and when their ſeditious prelates were ſent into baniſhment, a dreadful confederacy of deſperadoes was formed, who went under the name of *Circumcelliones*. Theſe eſpouſed the cauſe of the Donatiſts, and over-ran a conſiderable part of Africa. They committed the moſt cruel outrages, till they were at laſt defeated at the battle of Bagnia by Macarius, who had been ſent againſt them by the Emperor Conſtans, one of the ſons of Conſtantine the Great.

The hereſy which created the greateſt diſturbance in the fourth century was that of the Arians. It is univerſally agreed, that one Arius, a prieſt of the church of Alexandria, and a native of Lybia Cyrenaica, was the founder of this ſect. He began to publiſh his errors about the year 318. He maintained that the λογος, or the Word, was a creature produced out of nothing, and of a ſubſtance different

different from the Father: That Chriſt, the Son of God, had a beginning, was the firſt and nobleſt of all the works of God, but inferior to him in nature and dignity; and that the ſupreme Being formed the univerſe by his inſtrumentality, as an Agent of ſubordinate rank. Arius was a man of great ſubtlety and eloquence: He endeavoured to defend his doctrine with great zeal, and he gained a vaſt number of diſciples who warmly eſpouſed it. Among them there were perſons eminent both for their rank and learning. For ſome time the controverſy was conſidered as of ſmaller moment; but a flame ſoon enſued: Diſſentions and commotions multiplied; the paſſions of men intermingled with diſputes of religion, and roſe to a great height. With a view to repreſs theſe, two councils were called at Alexandria, where Arius was condemned for hereſy, and expelled the communion of the Church. He ſtill continued, however, firm and unſhaken, and was indefatigable in propagating his opinions, and that with remarkable ſucceſs. Conſtantine the Great was then reigning; and in order to prevent further diſturbance, thought proper to convene a council of the biſhops of the eaſt and weſt, named the council of Nice; and which ſat at Nice in Bythinia *A. D.* 325.

Arius appeared there in perſon; was accuſed and depoſed. Athanaſius, biſhop of Alexandria, exerted himſelf with diſtinguiſhing zeal in behalf of the orthodox ſyſtem. A creed or confeſſion of faith was drawn up and publiſhed, framed with a particular view to oppoſe the Arian hereſy, and to ſet forth in explicit terms thoſe articles of religion which were attacked by it. This is ſometimes called the Nicene, at other times the Athanaſian Creed.

This

This celebrated council may be eſteemed the firſt æcumenical or general one, and conſiſted of no leſs than 318 biſhops, who aſſembled together with great ſtate and ſolemnity.

Some time afterwards, Arius found means to ingratiate himſelf with the Emperor, and was recalled from baniſhment about the year 330. The ſons of Conſtantine were differently diſpoſed in this religious controverſy. Conſtantius adhered to the Arian doctrine, whilſt his brothers the Emperors in the weſt, zealouſly ſupported the Nicene-creed. This occaſioned much tumult and confuſion in the Church; and the world then beheld jarring councils ſummoned together to condemn and counteract each others decrees. At laſt, under *Theodoſius* the Great, the council of Conſtantinople, which was aſſembled in the year 381, compleated the ruin and diſgrace of the Arians, ſolemnly confirmed the articles and proceedings of the council of Nice, and with great clearneſs aſſerted the divinity of the Holy Ghoſt.

The Arian-hereſy gave birth to a variety of inferior ſects. Some, in defending that, went extravagant lengths, even beyond their leader; and others, in oppoſing it, ran into contrary extremes, whilſt they invented a number of fanciful hypotheſes for a ſolution of ſacred myſteries. So difficult a matter it is to obſerve a juſt medium, and to inveſtigate truth both with accuracy and ſimplicity.

The Photinians are ſo called from Photinus, a native of Galatia, and biſhop of *Sirmium*. He was a diſciple of Marcellus biſhop of Ancyra, who had been a member in the council of Nice, and who had there warmly contended againſt the doctrine of Arius. He afterwards publiſhed a book againſt the Arian biſhops, titled, the Submiſſion of Jeſus Chriſt; in which he advanced ſeveral propoſitions which

which favoured of Sabellianiſm. Photinus avowed his opinions with greater boldneſs, and expreſsly declared, that the Son, or Word, was not a diſtinct perſon from the Father; and that Chriſt was deſigned Son of God, only as born of the Virgin Mary; and that the Holy Ghoſt was merely a divine virtue and operation of Deity. His error was formally condemned in a council held at Antioch in the year 345, and alſo by another which met at Milan 346. He himſelf was at laſt depoſed, and died in Galatia about the year 376.

Appollinaris, biſhop of Laodicea, was the head of a different ſect. He maintained the divinity of our Saviour with ſuch warmth, as at laſt to deny his humanity. He was of opinion, that Chriſt was not endued with an intelligent ſoul, but that the Deity, united with fleſh, was the ſole intellectual principle in Chriſt, and performed all the offices of what we denominate reaſon, or mind in man. Some of this man's followers affirmed that the fleſh of Chriſt was not a real but apparent body; and thus attributed only one nature to our Saviour, even the Divine, from which doctrine many conſequential errors flowed. Theſe notions, however, gained ground for ſome time, but their farther ſpread was prevented by ſeveral imperial edicts, and at laſt were moſtly repreſſed by the united efforts of learning and orthodoxy, and the authoritative decrees of councils.

I might mention many other inferior ſects and ſchiſms, particularly, the Semi-Arians, Priſcillianiſts, Audeans, Collyridians, Antidicomarianites, and Meſſalians, *&c.* but we paſs them over, and ſhall notice a few more of greater conſequence.

There were three hereſies, which, in a ſpecial manner, diſturbed the tranquillity of the Church in

the fifth century; theſe were Pelagianiſm, Neſtorianiſm, and Eutychianiſm.

Pelagius, the founder of the firſt, was a native of Britain, and was powerfully ſupported by Celeſtius of the kingdom of Ireland. They were both of them Monks, and maintained a conſiderable degree of reputation at Rome for ſeveral years. There they propagated their particular opinions for ſome time in a private manner. Afterwards, upon the approach of the Goths about the year 410, they thought proper to retire. They firſt went into Sicily, and next to Africa, where they publiſhed their tenets in a more open manner. Cæleſtius continued for ſome time at Carthage, till he was condemned in a council which met there. Pelagius paſſed into Paleſtine, and obtained patronage and protection from John biſhop of Jeruſalem. The peculiar opinions taught by theſe hereticks were ſuch as theſe: That there is no ſuch thing as original ſin: That Adam's guilt did not deſcend to his poſterity: That all mankind are born in the ſame ſtate of perfection with their great primogenitor: That man may, by the native exertion of his own faculties, be inclined to what is good, and able to perform it, without the direct aſſiſtance of Divine grace: And that men may arrive to ſuch a pitch of holineſs as to be no more ſubject to the dominion of ſin. Theſe dangerous notions were combated by many of the orthodox perſuaſion, particularly by St Auguſtine. At ſame time they were readily received by not a few; and by artful evaſions and explications, both Pelagius and Cæleſtius paſſed uncenſured by councils held at *Jeruſalem* and *Dioſpolis*, and were even acquitted by Zoſimus biſhop of Rome. At laſt, however, they were condemned by the council of Epheſus, and their tenets

tenets repreſſed by ſeveral ſucceſſive councils, and by the authority of imperial edicts.

Thereupon, a kind of new ſect ſprouted from hence, ſtiled Semi-Pelagians, about the year 430. Theſe endeavoured to modify matters by certain conceſſions, and acknowledged the neceſſity of Divine aſſiſtances, to make men perſevere and advance in goodneſs; but they were ſo indulgent to free-will, and human liberty, as to think that men may of themſelves believe, and may chuſe and do what is right; and that thereupon the grace of God ſeconds their pious endeavours. They rejected the doctrine of predeſtination and abſolute decrees, and aſſerted that Chriſt had died for all mankind, and that the degree of grace neceſſary to ſalvation was offered to all.

Theſe opinions were greedily embraced by great multitudes. They were indeed warmly defended by ſome, and as violently attacked by others; and at laſt the council of Orange, which was held in the year 529, ſolemnly condemned the tenets of the Semi-Pelagians. But they have furniſhed much matter of ſpeculation and controverſy to the Church, even to this day, and men diſtinguiſhed both for learning and piety, have entertained very different ſentiments upon ſome of theſe points.

Neſtorius, who was promoted to the See of Conſtantinople, gave riſe to a ſect which was called after his name. It was a capital article with him, to believe, that the Virgin Mary could not be called the mother of God, but of Chriſt. This opinion he zealouſly taught himſelf, and encouraged others to do ſo. It was a diſtinction which was looked on as heretical, and as tending to diſown the Divinity of Chriſt. He farther affirmed, there were two perſons in Chriſt, the divine and human, and that they were united only in will and affection.

tion. Neſtorius gained, however, many partizans; and his rank and eminency in the Church gave his opinion a ſtamp of peculiar authority. Yet this very circumſtance excited the envy and jealouſy of others, particularly of Cyril, biſhop of Alexandria: He took upon him to cenſure Neſtorius, and afterwards formed a ſcheme with the biſhop of Rome of aſſembling a council, which was accordingly held at Alexandria. There Neſtorius was anathematized, and degraded from his Epiſcopal dignity. Neſtorius remonſtrated againſt ſuch proceedings as unjuſt and null, charged his adverſaries with Arianiſm, and held a council in his own palace of fifty biſhops, who were but newly arrived, who in their turn excommunicated thoſe who had depoſed him, and acted without them, tho' undoubted members. Much trouble and tumult hereupon enſued, till the Emperor was pleaſed to interpoſe, and declare that Neſtorius was juſtly depoſed. He ordered him to depart to his monaſtry, appointed a ſucceſſor in the See of Conſtantinople, and exhorted all to unity and harmony.

The writings and doctrines of Neſtorius were ſtill, however, diffuſed far and near, particularly in Aſſyria and Perſia. This was owing, in a great meaſure, to the indefatigable activity of Barſumas, biſhop of *Niſibis*. He ingratiated himſelf with the Perſian Monarch, and founded a famous ſchool as a ſeminary of Neſtorian doctors, who were from thence detached into different countries from time to time.

Eutychius gave name to another ſect which ran into a different extreme. He was an abbot of a monaſtry at Conſtantinople, and taught, that in Chriſt there was but one nature after the Union, namely, the Incarnate Word, whilſt he condemned ſuch who would aſſert a twofold nature. This opinion

nion likewiſe made a conſiderable progreſs, and occaſioned no ſmall diſorder and contention. Councils were ſummoned to take cognizance of the matter, and they at different occaſions paſſed contradictory ſentences, according to the ſway of party, and the influence of intrigue. *Flavianus*, Patriarch of Conſtantinople, aſſembled a council, where Eutychius was excommunicated, and his doctrine condemned, as denying the humanity of Jeſus Chriſt. Upon this, the abbot lodged an appeal to a general council, which was, by order of Theodoſius, aſſembled at Epheſus in the year 449. *Dioſcorus*, biſhop of Alexandria, preſided in it, a man of an arrogant and cruel complexion; an inveterate enemy to the biſhop of Conſtantinople, and who ſecretly favoured the errors of Eutychius. He was hereupon ſolemnly acquitted by the council, and Flavianus his proſecutor was barbarouſly ſcourged, and ſent into baniſhment. Indeed all matters were here carried on with a very high hand, without regard to juſtice or order, and in a manner peculiarly inconſiſtent with the character and dignity of an eccleſiaſtical court, ſo that the Greeks beſtowed on this Epheſian council the epithet of σύνοδον λῃστρικὴν, or an aſſembly of robbers.

Upon the death of Theodoſius, *Martianus* his ſucceſſor in the empire, was prevailed on by urgent repreſentations to conveen a general council at Chalcedon, which he himſelf honoured with his imperial preſence. In this grand and crowded aſſembly, conſiſting of about 600 prelates, Eutychius was condemned, his doctrines were declared heretical, and a confeſſion of faith was drawn up and ſubſcribed, aſſerting, That in Jeſus Chriſt two natures were united in one perſon, without confuſion or alteration, and that he is conſubſtantial with God according to his divinity, and with man in virtue

virtue of his humanity. Many other matters were taken under conſideration and determined, particularly with regard to polity and diſcipline, and the peculiar powers and privileges of certain biſhops in the Church, though not without warm oppoſition, and conſiderable degrees of jealouſy and diſcontent.

From theſe and other hereſies already in the Church, aroſe various new ſects and ſubdiviſions of ſects, particularly the *Monoſophyſites* and Monothelites. The former acknowledged there were two natures in Chriſt, yet that they were ſo conjoined and conſtituted as to form but one proper nature. The other, whilſt they allowed the two natures to remain diſtinct, yet maintained that Chriſt had but one will, which was abſorbed in and compoſed of the Divine. Many councils were called in the ſixth and ſeventh centuries to take cognizance of theſe and other matters which occurred. Many authors appeared on both ſides, to defend and attack the different tenets and opinions which were ſtarted from time to time. And theſe religious conteſts ſerved to embitter men's ſpirits, to kindle ſtrife and animoſity, and to divert the attention from the practical duties of the Goſpel. It muſt be acknowledged that truth in general is a valuable jewel. Divine truth is of all others moſt important, and ought to be aſſerted and propagated with zeal, and guarded with inviolable fidelity. But too many miſtook their own imaginations for the revelations of Scripture, and careſſed the opinions of human invention, as if they had been the ſacred oracles of infallible truth. Philoſophical diſputes, metaphyſical diſtinctions, and logical terms, were too frequently introduced, and a kind of ſcholaſtic divinity came to be in vogue, which rather tended to bewilder and puzzle than to convince or ſatisfy the

the mind. Much error, controverſy and diſturbance would have been happily prevented, had men conſidered the mighty difference betwixt knowing or believing the exiſtence of things in general, and underſtanding their phyſical nature, or the mode and manner of their operation; had they duly reflected on their own imperfection, or on the immenſity of an infinite Being; how unable they are perfectly to comprehend their own make and conſtitution, ſtill leſs the wonders of nature around them, and leaſt of all, the adorable myſteries of the inviſible almighty Creator of the univerſe.

We who live in theſe peaceable times, and amidſt a kind of unbounded toleration, may perhaps be apt to wonder, how that matters of mre ſpeculation, as ſome may call them, ſhould have created ſuch great commotions, and required ſuch frequent and powerful interpoſitions. But we muſt underſtand, that in thoſe days they appeared in another point of light, as of real moment, both in themſelves and on account of conſequences, as connected with the ſyſtem of religion, or with the fabric and polity of the Church. One man muſt make allowance for the frame and faſhions, and ſingular notions of his neighbour; and ſo ought one age carefully to conſider the peculiar complexion and circumſtances of another. Some matters, minute in themſelves, may have been in the courſe and concatenation of events, of material influence, which yet are unknown to us, and might have eſcaped the ſcrutiny and obſervation of the moſt faithful and inquiſitive hiſtorian. Some of theſe very controverſies have been tranſmitted to us, do ſtill ſubſiſt, are treated by Polemical writers with unabating ardour, and have produced conſiderable ferment in our eccleſiaſtical courts. Beſides, there is a natural connection between Church and

and State. This was remarkably cloſe and intimate in thoſe early ages, before the boundaries of civil and eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction were defined with preciſion. And when both theſe reſpectable bodies interfere at once, as was then frequently the caſe, their movements muſt be more apparent, ſtriking, and conſequential.

With reſpect to remarkable authors who flouriſhed in this period, famous for their learning and character, we may with propriety give the firſt place to Euſebius. He was born in Paleſtine in the reign of Galienus, and elected biſhop of Cæſarea in 314. He was juſtly eſteemed for his great extent of learning, and for the eminent ſervice which he rendered the Church by the performances which he publiſhed. The moſt diſtinguiſhed of theſe are his books of the Preparation and Demonſtration of the Goſpel, and his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory. He likewiſe wrote a Treatiſe againſt Hierocles, a heathen philoſopher, who had impiouſly compared Apollonius Tyaneus to Jeſus Chriſt.

Here it may not be improper to obſerve, that this grand impoſtor appeared in the firſt century, in the time of the Emperor Domitian. He was born at Tyana, a city of Cappadocia, and died in the reign of *Coccæius Nerva*. Philoſtratus undertook to write his life in the third century, about 100 years after the death of his hero. In the reign of Diocleſian, Hierocles, an implacable enemy to Chriſtianity, thought proper to write a book againſt it, which he called *Philalethes*. With a view to caſt a ſlur on the Goſpel, and expoſe it, if poſſible, to contempt, he there inſtitutes a compariſon betwixt Chriſt and this Apollonius, pretending that the one had wrought miracles as well as the other, and boldly averring that the latter had aſcended to heaven, as well as the former. Euſebius refutes his

his book, and the whole of that malicious ſtory in an unanſwerable manner. He ſhews, that *Apollonius* was ſo far from deſerving to be compared with Chriſt, that he ought not to be reputed a philoſopher, and was deſtitute of every quality that can conſtitute a good man. He likewiſe proves, that Philoſtratus who wrote his life, is an author utterly unworthy of any credit, that he contradicts himſelf at every turn, ſpeaks doubtfully of the miracles which he himſelf relates, and aſſerts innumerable things which are abſolute fables.

Beſides, Philoſtratus not only wrote about a century after Apollonius was dead, but this without any memoirs or records to vouch the veracity of his narrative. Not only are Chriſtian writers ſilent concerning him, but likewiſe the very beſt Heathen authors who lived about that time, and long before Philoſtratus, as Tacitus, Sueton, Pliny, Plutarch, Dion Caſſius, and Celſus. Indeed the principal motive which induced Philoſtratus to publiſh ſo idle a ſtory, was to pay a compliment to Caracalla and Julia, who were fond of Sophiſts and Magicians to a pitch of extravagance, and kept their court crowded with them. Nay, Philoſtratus acknowledges, that Apollonius was reputed by the Magicians at Babylon, and by the Indian Brachmans, and the Gymnoſophiſts in Egypt, a profeſſed Magician, that he was incarcerated by the Emperor Domitian for magical arts; and that he had ſacrificed to the ſun, to Jupiter, and other heathen deities. And Lucian mentions one Alexander, who was well acquainted with the falſe and pretended feats of the Tyanean impoſtor, and the whole of his infamous hiſtory.

We have had occaſion already to make mention of Athanaſius. He was a moſt zealous defender of the orthodox faith, a violent enemy to the Ari-

ans, and wrote a great many treatiſes againſt them. On this account they perſecuted him with unrelenting malice; and through their miſrepreſentations he ſometimes ſuffered very conſiderably. According to the variations of their power and intereſt, he himſelf experienced a viciſſitude of good and bad fortune, ſo that his life was indeed a kind of checquered ſcene of honour and diſgrace. He was promoted to the See of Alexandria, *A. D.* 326, and had his life prolonged to the year 373.

From about 350, till towards the end of the fourth century, flouriſhed four Greek Fathers, Cyril of Jeruſalem, Baſil, ſurnamed the Great, Gregory of Nazianzen, and Gregory of Niſſa, alſo one Latin Father St Ambroſe, archbiſhop of Milan. They were all of them famous for their learning and writings, and for their rank and influence in the Church.

We muſt next take notice of St Chryſoſtom, patriarch of Conſtantinople. His high character for a noble and maſculine eloquence, correſponds with the etymology of his name, ſignifying Golden-mouth. He was a prelate of diſtinguiſhed dignity, of great erudition and of ſublime piety. He publiſhed a great variety of performances, which make up eleven volumes in folio, that ſtand forth an illuſtrious monument of genius and oratory.

Jerome was a monk in Paleſtine, who was ſo fond of ſtudy and retirement, that though ordained a prieſt, yet he declined the functions of the ſacerdotal office, that he might wholly devote himſelf to the purſuits of literature. He exhibited many noble ſpecimens of this, in a great variety of publications, which diſcover great ability and induſtry. He was a man of warm complexion, and rather of an enthuſiaſtical turn, which tinctures ſome of his writings, whilſt he treated with ſeverity ſuch who differed

differed in their ſentiments from him. He was born about the year 340, and died in an advanced age, *A. D.* 420.

St *Auguſtine* was born in Numidia under the Emperor Conſtantius, on the 13th November 354. His mother Monica was a woman of ſingular piety, and took great care to have her ſon properly inſtructed in the principles of Chriſtianity. He was for ſome time profeſſor of rhetorick at Rome, and afterwards at Milan, where it is thought he was converted, and touched in an extraordinary manner by the ſermons of St Ambroſe. He came to be created biſhop of Hippo in Africa, and by his preaching and writing ſoon acquired a ſhining reputation. He publiſhed a vaſt number of books on many different ſubjects, repleniſhed with learning, and which breathe a ſpirit of exalted piety, and fervent zeal.

Lactantius, another Latin Father, has been by ſome called the Chriſtian Cicero. He writes on various ſubjects; and his language is pure, diffuſive, and inſinuating.

Many other authors appeared in a long train of ſucceſſion, who are of inferior note and conſideration in the republic of learning. Some of them were ſolely employed in compiling from thoſe who had gone before them, in making tranſlations, and in collecting the flowers of erudition and eloquence which were ſcattered through their voluminous works. Others who pretended to originality, blended their theological performances with falſe notions of philoſophy, and their morality with ſophiſtical reaſonings and inconcluſive arguments. They delighted in dark and ambiguous terms of art, in cobweb controverſies and diſtinctions, and in all the jargon of ſcholaſtic divinity. And not a few diſcarded the aids of human literature, went into all

all the fanaticiſm of the monaſtic orders, and poured out their incoherent rhapſodies, as if they had been the effuſions of rational devotion. Ignorance and ſuperſtition prevailed to a melancholy pitch, eſpecially during the two laſt centuries of our preſent period. Many of the biſhops were incapable of compoſing their own diſcourſes, and the Clergy in general were ſunk in idleneſs and luxury, and became illiterate to a ſhameful degree. The vaſt wealth which had flowed into the Church unfortunately contributed to corrupt its paſtors, and to render them averſe to the painful purſuits of knowledge, neglectful of the duties of their ſacerdotal function, and inattentive to the grand purpoſes of real religion. In room of this were ſubſtituted the worſhip of images, the invocation of departed ſaints, the doctrine of purgatory, the meritorious efficacy of good works, when under the direction and diſpoſal of the prieſts, veneration of relicts, and their powerful energy in healing mental maladies and corporeal diſeaſes. External rites and ceremonies were multiplied to an enormous degree, which threw a dark ſhade over the amiable ſimplicity of the Goſpel, and ſerved to nouriſh notions totally inconſiſtent with its ſublime ſpirit and intention.

The dreadful inundation of the northern nations in the fifth and ſixth centuries, the ravages they committed, the ſettlements they afterwards made, and the ſcenes of terror and confuſion which they ſpread through the empire, proved very unfavourable to the arts and ſciences, and to every rational or religious improvement. True indeed, this barbarous people did at laſt embrace Chriſtianity; yet all Chriſtendom ſuffered unſpeakably by their formidable and fatal influence. Beſides the general calamities which they occaſioned, they for a long time

time haraſſed and perſecuted the Chriſtians with ſingular ferocity, inſtigated by the remains of Pagan ſuperſtition, which was conformable to their own falſe religion. And when converted to the faith, they carried along with them many of their idolatrous uſages, which were too readily adopted by a compliant Clergy, who even became ambitious of imitating them by ſupernumerary inventions of their own.

Learning was then baniſhed from her public ſeats where ſhe had been cultivated and honoured, to the cells and cloiſters of convents and monaſtries. There ſhe met with a ſorry reception, amidſt the gloom and reſtrictions of ſolitary ſuperſtition. This was her only ſanctuary in thoſe times of univerſal diſorder. Yet it muſt be acknowledged, that to this retreat we ſtand indebted for thoſe treaſures of ancient literature which are tranſmitted to us. Thoſe indolent and unpoliſhed Monks, who were incapable of maſterly productions of their own, or of ſtretching their genius in any elaborate efforts, were faithful depoſitaries of the writings of others, copied them out at their leiſure hours for the uſe of the world, and happily reſcued and preſerved from the hands of Gothic barbariſm, the remains of venerable antiquity, both ſacred and profane.

Monaſtic inſtitutions got an early footing in the Church, and now prevailed in a very extenſive manner. Fear of perſecution, a love of eaſe and indolence, a moroſe and melancholy turn of mind, or bad habit of body, falſe and fanatical notions of religion, and the ſuperſtition of thoſe times, which, viewed with veneration, ſuch who led a monaſtic life, as endued with celeſtial accompliſhments, and of uncommon ſanctity, and the vaſt overflow of wealth which from all quarters poured in to their ſup-

ſupport,—all this multiplied the number of *Monks* and *Hermits* to an amazing degree.

Under the perſecution by *Decius*, Paul the hermit, by ſome reputed the firſt of that order, retired into the diſmal deſarts of Thebais, and there led a ſolitary, abſtemious life, for the ſpace of ninety years. His example was followed by immenſe multitudes who diſtinguiſhed themſelves by retirement, by bodily mortifications and auſterities, and who in former times went by the name of Aſcetics. Yet this ſevere and unſociable life, was not uncommon in Egypt, Syria, and India, even before the coming of Chriſt. The Eſſenes among the Jews affected it, and the Mahometans themſelves practiſe it. * It firſt began in the eaſtern countries, where it roſe to the higheſt pitch, as more congenial with the gloomy complexion of the inhabitants, who languiſh under a ſcorching ſun and glowing atmoſphere.

From the eaſt the monaſtic ſpirit paſſed into the weſt, firſt into Italy, and next into Gaul, under the ſanction of St Martin the famous biſhop of Tours. It gradually gained ground in the other countries of Europe, and particularly in Britain, during the ſixth century, under the zeal and influence of Congall, a celebrated Abbot. Afterwards, this contagion ſoon ſpread into Ireland, Germany, and Switzerland, which were over-run with ſwarms of Monks, and covered with convents and monaſtries. Then were to be ſeen whole troops of people ſhut up within the walls of a convent, leading a common and regulated life under the direction and authority of their own abbot, ſequeſtered from all the reſt of mankind.

St Anthony paſſes with ſome as the firſt who reduced the monaſtic ſtate into form and order, and propoſed

* Lucas's travels, vol. 2, p. 363, 364.

propoſed plans of diſcipline and government. Vaſt numbers viſited him in his ſolitude, and in imitation of his example, built hutts and cottages in the vicinity of this hermit's cell, and thus were the firſt monaſtries erected in Egypt.

St *Hilarion* introduced them into Paleſtine, and St *Pacomus* farther modelled the monaſtic life, and united ſeveral monaſtries into a congregation. He preſcribed for them a variety of new regulations, improved their former diſcipline, and eſtabliſhed nunneries hitherto unknown. Upon this, large communities of women took on a vow of virginity, lived recluſe from the ſight of men, were buried by themſelves in ſuperſtitious ſolitude, and received the veil with great ſolemnity.

The monaſtic tribes were diſtributed into various orders, and obſerved different rules. Some of them borrowed their name from the founder of their particular claſs or ſect, others from that mode of mortification or diſcipline to which they were peculiarly attached.

All of them were at firſt compoſed of laymen, and were ſubject to the juriſdiction of their provincial biſhop. Afterwards they conſiſted of multitudes of the clerical profeſſion, and this by particular permiſſion of the Emperors themſelves. This contributed to increaſe the credit and reputation of theſe monaſtic ſocieties, many immunities and privileges were conferred upon them, they came to be governed by *abbots* of their own, who were inveſted with a kind of Epiſcopal power and dignity, and biſhops were frequently choſen out of theſe fanatical fraternities, and exalted to the higheſt eminency in the Church.

A kind of epidemic paſſion raged in different countries, for erecting and endowing convents and monaſtries, whilſt the ſpirit of genuine Chriſtianity grew

grew cold and languiſhed. Too ſoon did many of the very monaſtic order diſgrace their pretenſions in a ſcandalous manner, ran into all manner of licentiouſneſs, and ſometimes excite even civil diſorders and ſeditions.

Fanaticiſm was moſt predominant in the eaſt, whilſt profligacy prevailed in the weſtern convents, whoſe members lived more at large, and were much leſs bound to the rules of diſcipline which they profeſſed. Some of theſe orders embarked deep in ſecular concerns, ingratiated themſelves with princes, got into the ſecrets of the Cabinet, became a party in political factions, and exerted themſelves to promote the power and enlarge the authority of the Roman Pontifs * The *Benedictines* in particular expreſſed their zeal and activity in this manner, though very different from the deſigns of their pious founder, *Benedict* of Nurſia. He inſtituted this religious order in the year 529, which in proceſs of time acquired immenſe power and riches, roſe ſuperior to moſt other monaſtic ſocieties, and obtained a commanding ſway and influence both in Church and State.

The eccleſiaſtical order in general were enchanted with a love of dominion and authority, and were attentive to every meaſure by which theſe could be promoted. Not only convents, but churches were multiplied to a great degree, as if the mere erection and conſecration of theſe ſacred edifices, could ſtand in the room of real religion, or atone for the want of virtue, and the practice of vice. To give the greater encouragement to this ſpecies of religious liberality, with a view to engage the great, the opulent, and ambitious, into a ſacred competition of excelling here, a privilege was

* Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. tranſlated into Engl. by Dr Maclain, vol. 1, p. 448.

was conferred upon ſuch who built and endowed public places of worſhip, to nominate the miniſters who were to officiate in them. And here we may find the origin of *patronage*, which ſome imagine commenced ſo early as in the fourth century, and which has continued in the Church ever ſince its firſt appearance, under a variety of forms.

The unbounded ambition of the prelatical order, already exalted to a kind of princely power, proved prejudicial in the higheſt degree to the intereſts of religion, and to the peace and proſperity of the Church. Jealouſies, diſſentions, perſonal animoſities and civil broils, flowed from this unchriſtian ſource, which tore in pieces the contending parties, and at laſt occaſioned a diviſion of the *eaſtern* and *weſtern* churches.

The biſhops of Rome, Conſtantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jeruſalem came to be diſtinguiſhed, particularly in the fifth century, with the venerable title of Patriarchs, and were inveſted with very extenſive powers and privileges. Hitherto the Emperors themſelves were conſidered as the ſupreme head of the Chriſtian hierarchy, and the great legiſlative power reſided in the councils. The Patriarchs, elated with their vaſt power, opulence, and ſplendor, began now to affect a kind of independent juriſdiction, and each to aſſume a lordly ſupremacy. The two moſt formidable rivals in this ambitious conteſt, were the biſhops of Rome and Conſtantinople. The council of Chalcedon held in the year 451, conferred on the latter the ſame rights and honours which the See of Rome poſſeſſed, with the conſent of the Emperor himſelf. This gave additional luſtre and dignity to the See of Conſtantinople, and inflamed the ambition of its Patriarchs. They extended their juriſdiction among the eaſtern churches, reduced

the biſhops under their authority, and made even thoſe of Alexandria and Antioch ſtoop to their dominion. Not content with this, they encroached upon the provinces more directly ſubject to the Roman Pontif. He on the other hand oppoſed theſe uſurpations, and Leo the Great, in a particular manner, exerted himſelf to check the growing power of this formidable rival. The biſhops of Rome contended with ſuperior advantages, both of wealth and power, and thoſe of the prelatical order who were offended at the invaſions of the Byzantine Patriarch, had recourſe to Rome, where they were kindly cheriſhed and ſupported. By this acceſſion of aid, and from a concurrence of other cauſes, the Church of Rome increaſed its authority, enlarged its empire, and at laſt obtained a manifeſt ſuperiority. The declining power of the Emperors, and the confuſion and barbariſm introduced by the northern nations, favoured ſuch a deſign, and the Gothic Princes at laſt upon their converſion, paid court to the Roman Pontifs, whom they beheld with a kind of ſuperſtitious veneration, and in order to ſecure their intereſt, loaded them with riches and honours.

In the ſixth century, Gregory the Great aſſerted, in the warmeſt manner, the pre-eminence of the Roman Pontifs, and their ſupreme authority, even over the Patriarchs of Conſtantinople. Theſe high pretenſions gradually gained ground, and at laſt prevailed in the weſt, whilſt they met with powerful oppoſition in the eaſt, except from thoſe who were at variance with the See of Conſtantinople. Yet it was for a long time that the biſhops of Rome had to ſtruggle hard for the ſupremacy, the grand object of their ambition. They had to encounter many difficulties and violent reſiſtance, both from the chiefs of the eccleſiaſtical order, and from ſecular

lar princes. Theſe endeavoured from time to time to repreſs their aſpiring views. The Kings of the northern nations, who had penetrated into the empire, conveened councils and enacted laws by their own authority, they ſometimes ſummoned eccleſiaſtics to their tribunals, and none were raiſed to the Pontificate without their knowledge and conſent. The Popes of Rome had not as yet aſſerted an abſolute prerogative over princes and people. Every event and circumſtance was, however, improved in the moſt artful manner, in order to prepare the world for this arrogant demand, and ſo as to rivet, by the moſt effectual methods, the galling yoke of papal tyranny, upon the necks of implicit and puſillanimous men.

The appearance of the famous Mahomet, the new religion which he introduced, the bloody wars which he excited, and the extenſive conqueſts which he made, rouſed the zeal and emulation of the Roman Pontif, furniſhed occaſions for the more ample exerciſe of deſpotic power, and rendered many more humble ſupplicants to his authority.

The grand Impoſtor firſt appeared at Mecca in Arabia, *A. D.* 612. He was of common extraction, and was bred to merchandize by his uncle Abutaleb. But he poſſeſſed great natural talents, a perſuaſive eloquence, and had a ſoul turned for ambition and enterprize. He was employed for ſome time as a factor for an opulent widow, and had the management of an immenſe eſtate belonging to her. He ſoon inſinuated himſelf into favour, and obtained her in marriage. By this means he became ſuperior in wealth to moſt in the city, and his aſpiring mind ſoon conceived the deſign of poſſeſſing the ſovereignty. Having maturely weighed in his thoughts all the poſſible means of effectuating his ambitious project, he ſaw none

ſo

ſo probable as framing that impoſture which he publiſhed in his Alcoran, with ſo much miſchief to the world. Mahomet, however, found himſelf involved in great difficulties by reſiding in Mecca, where he was ſo well known. He therefore boldly aſſumed the character of a prophet ſent by God, to root out Polytheiſm and idolatry in the world, to reform the religion of the Arabians, and to amend the Jewiſh and Chriſtian worſhip. He engaged a certain number of truſty diſciples, and with them retired to Yathreb, now called Medina, about 270 miles from Mecca, about the year 622.

This place he called the city of the Prophet, the whole of which was ſubject to his ſole command and authority. There, with great ſophiſtry, he preached and propagated his falſe religion for the ſpace of 13 years, and for the remaining 10 years of his life he fought for it, obtained many ſignal victories, ſpread the terror of his arms and the deluſions of his impoſture far and near through the world, and founded the Saracen empire. His ſucceſſor *Abubeker* made irruptions into Paleſtine and Syria. Omar, the next Caliph, was a moſt ſucceſsful warrior, and extended his conqueſts with an aſtoniſhing rapidity. His reign continued only for about 10 years; and in this ſhort ſpace of time, he ſubdued all Arabia, Syria, Meſopotamia, Perſia, and Egypt*. The Mahometan religion made its progreſs in the world, not by argument or the gentle arts of perſuaſion, but by force, menaces, and blood; and Mahomet ſtrictly diſcharged all diſputes or enquiries concerning it. Beſides, his Alcoran contained many groſs miſrepreſentations of God, too ſuitable to vulgar notions; and his law was cunningly adapted to the taſte of the eaſtern nations, and to the corrupt paſſions of mankind in general.

* Ockley's Hiſt. of the Saracens, vol. I. p. 243.

general. The circumſtances alſo of time and place did very much favour the ſpread of Mahometan deluſion. The Arabians, in particular, laboured under the groſſeſt ignorance, and were much addicted to ſuperſtition. The moſt lamentable diviſions prevailed among the Chriſtians. They were ſplit into numberleſs ſects and parties, and their zeal was exhauſted againſt one another, inſtead of being directed againſt the common foe. Thus Africa, which had been delivered from the dominion of the Vandals in 533, by Beliſarius that illuſtrious commander, were ſubjected to that of the Saracens about the year 647.

The tyrant Phocas, who had waded through blood to the imperial throne, thought proper to oppoſe the pretenſions of the See of Conſtantinople, and about this time to confer upon the biſhops of Rome the title of *Univerſal Paſtor*, or *Oecumenical Patriarch*. This introduced the papal ſupremacy; and thus did Antichriſt fix his foot in the weſtern and eaſtern parts of the earth, much about the ſame time, to the dreadful detriment of the Chriſtian world.

The diſtinguiſhed dignity with which the biſhops of Rome were now ſolemnly inveſted by the Emperor, highly gratified the aſpiring views of the Roman Pontif; and no artifice was left unemployed for enlarging and eſtabliſhing it. This, however, alarmed the jealouſy of many, and for a conſiderable time excited violent oppoſition. Multitudes expreſſed their ſuſpicion and abhorrence of ſuch lordly power and dominion. The churches of Gaul and Spain, though reſpectful to the See of Rome, yet inſiſted on their own authority. Italy itſelf was far from being obſequious. The biſhops of Ravenna were too haughty to ſubmit; and the Britons

Britons and Scots long maintained a kind of religious liberty.

But ignorance and ſuperſtition made a ſwift progreſs in the ſeventh and eighth centuries. The Clergy were at indefatigable pains, to cheriſh among the vulgar high ideas of their own importance, to court the favour of the great, and to perſuade them into a belief that it was a duty to yield an implicit ſubmiſſion to their authority. This was not a difficult undertaking in theſe dark and ſuperſtitious ages. Thereupon the prieſts modelled the Chriſtian doctrine according to their own imaginations, impoſed their novelties and abſurd inventions upon an ignorant Laity, and drew from them liberal donations and valuable grants, by which eccleſiaſtical power was greatly augmented, and the treaſury of the Church vaſtly enriched. The number of convents and monks continued to increaſe, and in all debates or conteſts which aroſe either among themſelves or with others, they had conſtant recourſe to the Roman Pontif, as a ſovereign umpire, which practice contributed not a little to eſtabliſh papal uſurpation. The whole monkiſh order was particularly devoted to the See of Rome, ſought by all poſſible means to advance her power and intereſt, and were wont to repreſent her biſhops as ſo many demi-gods to the facile and credulous multitude whom they deluded. In return for theſe favours, convents and monaſtries were rewarded with peculiar privileges, exempted from the juriſdiction of biſhops, and rendered ſubject only to abbots of their own, who were exalted to a kind of epiſcopal dignity.

The Clergy in general in the ſeventh and eighth centuries, were over-run with ignorance, immerſed in indolence and ſuperſtition, lived in luxury, and were often guilty of the moſt enormous crimes. This

This was a fit ſeaſon for the prince of darkneſs to ſtalk abroad; Antichriſt availed himſelf of the errors and vices of the times; the Roman Pontif, inſtead of endeavouring to repreſs or remove, gave countenance to the growth of ſuperſtition and ignorance, and built the vaſt ſuperſtructure of papal power upon the ruins of real religion and genuine Chriſtianity.

PART

PART III.

THE third period of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, will preſent to our view the Romiſh hierarchy ſtill more fully eſtabliſhed, and the Pope of Rome uſurping more extenſive power, and ruling with deſpotic ſway, both as a ſpiritual and ſecular prince.

I have had occaſion to mention the formidable irruptions made into the empire at different times, particularly in the fifth and ſixth centuries, by the Goths, Vandals, Lombards, Burgundians, the Huns, Franks, and other barbarous nations. They ruſhed in amazing multitudes from the northern parts of Germany, from about the Baltic, from Sweden, Denmark, and Tartary, and like a mighty deluge ſpread devaſtation wherever they came. Theſe fierce and mighty conquerors diſmembered and ſhared the Roman empire among them. The kings of the Goths were for a conſiderable time maſters of almoſt all Italy, the north parts chiefly falling to the ſhare of the Lombards. *Narſes*, General of *Juſtinian*'s army, reduced the power of the Goths, and re-eſtabliſhed the dominion of the Greek Emperors in the year 553. The Lombards, who came from Pannonia, ravaged Italy in 568, and made large ſettlements there. The Exarchs

of Ravenna, who ruled under the Greek Emperors, endeavoured to expel them, maintained a long war againſt that people, and at laſt brought them into a kind of ſubjection. Various revolutions and many civil occurrences enſued, extraneous to our plan, or inconſiſtent with the brevity of it. But the Lombards obtaining poſſeſſion of a great part of Italy, did, in confederacy with other northern nations, lay ſiege to Rome *A. D.* 755. Pepin, king of France, to which dignity he was exalted by the Pope, was prevailed on to march to the relief of the imperial city. He raiſed the ſiege, obtained ſeveral victories over the Lombards, recovered Ravenna out of their hands, and this with the adjacent territory, together with the dominion of Rome, he conferred upon the Pope *A. D.* 756, who thereby became a temporal prince *. The Lombards endeavoured to regain Ravenna, whereupon Charlemagne, the ſon of Pepin, invaded Lombardy, and took *Didier* the laſt king priſoner. He confirmed Rome and Ravenna to the Pope, to which he added, in a very princely manner, the Marquiſate of Ancona, and the Dutchy of Spoletto or Umbria, *A. D.* 774. Thus the Roman Pontif was exalted to the dignity and opulence of a ſecular

* A conſiderable part of the book of Revelation, does, with evident propriety, relate to the Church of Rome. Among other paſſages the following one is applied to the Pope, viz. ch. xiii. v. 18. "Here is wiſdom. Let him that hath underſtanding count the number of the beaſt; for it is the number of a man: And his number is ſix hundred, three ſcore and ſix." The celebrated Sir Iſaac Newton decyphers it thus: The words Λατεινος and רומית, the man of Latium, or of Rome, conſiſt of numeral letters, which taken together, make 666. This number of years from the date of the Revelations, which was about *A. D.* 90, brings us to the year 756, which remarkably coincides with the preciſe time I have pitched on, at which period the Roman Pontif became a tem-

ſecular monarch, put in poſſeſſion of a large extent of territory, and inveſted with new powers and titles. This gave freſh additional luſtre to his former rank and grandeur, emboldened his ambitious pretenſions, and enabled him more effectually to proſecute his ſchemes of abſolute ſupremacy.

In return for all theſe mighty favours, the Pope Leo III. crowned Charlemagne Emperor of the Romans *A. D.* 800.

It may here be remarked as a kind of key to the original hiſtory of Europe, that a new empire was thus founded in the weſt, which comprehended Italy, France, Germany, and part of Spain. The emperors themſelves fixing their reſidence in Germany, divided Italy into ſeveral diſtricts and governments. The governors of theſe different provinces at laſt aſſumed to themſelves a ſovereign power; and ſome of them purchaſed with conſiderable ſums of money grants from the Emperor, confirming their reſpective titles, by which, ſeparate ſtates and principalities came to be erected. In imitation of this, and in proceſs of time, alſo from a concurrence of various events, France, Spain, and other European provinces were alſo disjoined, and formed into diſtinct independent kingdoms, ſuch as in general ſubſiſt at this day.

I may likewiſe obſerve, tho' by way of anticipation, that the Popes did for a long time acknowledge,

temporal power, repreſented by a beaſt according to prophetic language. From this as a kind of key, and from a variety of other circumſtances, is the æra of the fall of Babylon to be calculated. Mr Fleming, who is followed in this opinion by Sir Iſaac Newton and Mr Lowman, reckons, that the reign of popery is to continue from that time, viz. 756, for the ſpace of 1260 years, and that about the year 2016, or 2000, the papacy will be entirely deſtroyed, and that then the Millenium will commence.

ledge, that they held their territories of the Emperor, who was conſidered the grand patron and protector of the Church. This continued to be the caſe until the reign of the Emperor Henry IV. The Roman Pontif, particularly Gregory VII. tired of ſubjection, and obſerving how the Emperors ſometimes oppoſed, at other times annulled the election to the Papal-chair, ſhook off his allegiance, embroiled the Emperor's affairs in Germany and Italy, excited inſurrections againſt him, and even excommunicated his imperial maſter. And indeed the uſurpations of the Pontif upon the prerogatives of the Emperor, occaſioned frequent wars between them, of which the Italian princes availed themſelves, and thereby procured for their reſpective ſtates, peculiar powers and privileges from the contending parties, who courted their alliance.

The annual revenues of the Pope, may amount to one million Sterling, chiefly raiſed by a monopoly of corn, and from duties on wine and various other proviſions. He lives in great ſplendor and magnificence, and always makes his appearance with diſtinguiſhed ſtate and ſolemnity. He is deſpotic in his own dominions, and regulates the adminiſtration of civil government by himſelf alone, and ſuch officers as are of his ſole nomination. The conclave of Cardinals only intermeddle with eccleſiaſtical affairs, who are ſeventy in number, and whoſe vacancies are filled up by the Pope's appointment. His eccleſiaſtical dominion is far ſuperior to his temporal. The ſecular Clergy have a great dependance upon him, but the Monks and Regulars are entirely at his devotion, and may be accounted his militia, or indeed a kind of ſtanding army, ready to obey his orders *. They are in all computed

* Paul IV. boaſted of having 288,000 pariſhes, and 44,000 monaſtries under his juriſdiction.

computed to be about two millions in number, who are diſperſed through all the countries of the world, to aſſert his ſupremacy over princes and people, and to promote the doctrines and intereſts of the church of Rome. The revenues which the regular clergy and monaſtic orders draw from Roman Catholic kingdoms are reckoned by ſome to amount to twenty millions Sterling *per annum*, beſides caſual or certain ſtated oblations to the church, on their liberality to which the people are taught to believe their eternal ſalvation depends.

With reſpect to the doctrine of the church of Rome, they admit the Divine authority of the Old and New Teſtaments; and it would be well if they did reſt there, and would, as Proteſtants do, acknowledge Scripture the only infallible rule of faith and manners. But they likewiſe aſſert the ſupremacy and infallibility of the Pope, put many falſe gloſſes upon ſacred writ, and have introduced many uncommanded rites, abſurd ſuperſtitions, and dangerous doctrines, quite inconſiſtent with and repugnant to it. It is not eaſy to enumerate them all, but the following articles may ſerve for a ſpecimen.

They ſet out with maintaining the ſupreme authority and infallibility of the Pope, as a fundamental principle; and that it is neceſſary for every human creature to be ſubject to the See of Rome, of all which there is no manner of mention made in holy Scripture.

They teach the doctrine of purgatory, or of an intermediate ſtate of puniſhment in the other world, out of which ſouls are to be delivered by maſſes and prayers. Hence their numberleſs prayers for the dead, as if ſtill in a ſtate of probation. And yet this opinion is unſupported by any reaſon, but the

the immenſe wealth and profit which it brings into the purſes of the prieſts.

Another of their tenets which they ſacredly conform to, is the invocation and worſhip of the Virgin Mary *, and of ſaints departed, whom they think proper to canonize. Yet this is not only deſtitute of Scripture-warrant or example, but confeſſed by themſelves not to have been known or practiſed in the three firſt ages of the Church, becauſe it looked too like the Heathen idolatry.

The worſhip of images is an avowed doctrine and practice of the Romiſh Church, though expreſsly prohibited in the ſecond commandment.

Prayers, and the ſervice of God in an unknown tongue, is maintained amongſt them, though contrary to the very nature and end of all religious worſhip, and plainly condemned by the Apoſtle Paul.

The

* When I was in France, I have heard with aſtoniſhment, "O glorioſa Maria!" much oftner repeated in prayer than the ſacred names of God and Chriſt.

Will the Reader permit me to record a ſmall anecdote which ſerves to ſhew the ingenious arts made uſe of in Roman Catholic countries, for maintaining the idolatry of their church, and a high veneration for the Virgin Mary in particular? In one of the principal churches in France I obſerved a magnificent marble ſtatue of Lewis XIV. in his royal robes, and with a crown upon his head. He was repreſented to the life in an attitude of devotion, upon his knees, and with an elevation of eyes and hands. At laſt, it occurred to the clergy of that cathedral, that it would anſwer pious purpoſes, to erect a ſtatue of the Virgin Mary directly fronting the grand monarque. This was accordingly done; and by this device the king appears in a poſture of adoration directed to the Virgin. Her dreſs was perfectly modiſh in hoop and petticoat, and enriched with the fineſt Flanders lace I ever ſaw. I unwarily took hold of her apron, that I might the better obſerve its exquiſite fabric, when one of the prieſts checked me for my Proteſtant preſumption.

The ſame thing may be ſaid as to their locking up the Scriptures from the people in unknown language, and moſtly confining the uſe of it to the prieſt, contrary to the command of the Scriptures themſelves, and to the deſign of Almighty God in writing and publiſhing them.

Their doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, as if the bread and wine in the ſacrament were by the power of the prieſt, or at his word, converted into the real body and blood of our Saviour, is ſo flagrantly repugnant to reaſon and ſenſe, and ſo utterly abſurd, that nothing can equal it.

The giving the communion in one kind only, by with-holding the cup from the laity, is evidently contrary to our Lord's inſtitution of the ſacrament in both kinds.

Another falſe doctrine they eſpouſe is, the repetition of Chriſt's propitiatory ſacrifice in the maſs, ſo often as that is celebrated. Yet this is both needleſs and groundleſs, and quite inconſiſtent with Scripture, which ſays,—That by one offering Chriſt hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.

They likewiſe inculcate, that to the due adminiſtration of the ſacraments, an intention in the miniſter who officiates, to do what the parties partaking deſire, is requiſite. Thus perſons may be baptized, and receive the Lord's-ſupper, and yet really partake of neither ſacrament nor receive any benefit, if the prieſt, in a peeviſh or malicious humour, ſhould with-hold his ghoſtly intention, which is both abſurd and unſcriptural.

And whereas Proteſtants acknowledge the word of God, as the ſole ſtandard of faith and practice, the church of Rome ſuperadds ſeveral apocryphal books that are not of Divine original, and likewiſe

Oral

Oral Tradition, which they pretend has been tranſmitted from Chriſt and his Apoſtles; and declares that both the written and unwritten word are of equal authority.

Their doctrines of auricular confeſſion, by which their prieſts dive into the ſecrets of families, and keep the conſciences of people in awe; as alſo of a bank of merit *, and of indulgencies, to be ſold and parcelled out according to the prices which are paid, and by which they pretend to aſſign virtue to the greateſt ſinners, and to permit the commiſſion, or grant a pardon of the groſſeſt crimes, are indeed maſter-pieces of wicked and worldly policy.

They likewiſe aſſume a power over princes as well as people, *quâ ad ſpiritualia*: And therefore they take upon them to excommunicate kings, abſolve ſubjects from their allegiance to them, and ſometimes lay whole kingdoms under an interdict from word and ſacrament, by their papal bulls and edicts.

Their legends as to pretended miracles, their fictitious ſtories of ſaints, their pilgramages, penances, and proceſſions, their external rites and ceremonies and forms, deſcending even to foppery and grimace, are without number, by which they have not only diſgraced but almoſt overwhelmed Chriſtianity.

Popery is a moſt aſtoniſhing ſyſtem. It unites into it civil and eccleſiaſtical power, claims ſupremacy and infallibility; it affects to join heaven and earth together, the riches of this world and the glories of another; uſurps a dominion over the rights, the reaſon and conſciences of mankind, and blends all the ſuperſtitions of Heatheniſm with the beſt and pureſt religion in the world.

Such

* The Pope's abſolution ſometimes extends to all ſins paſt, preſent, and to come, even for ten or twenty thouſand years.

Such an eſtabliſhment, no doubt, flows from and diſcovers the deep depravity of human nature, that often corrupts and abuſes the beſt bleſſings. It is founded in falſehood and ignorance, is ſupported by ambition, fraud and force, proves productive of general corruption, and is of unſpeakable prejudice to mankind. This is permitted by an awful Providence, as a judgment and puniſhment for the ſins and iniquities of the world. By theſe God has been provoked to "ſend men ſtrong deluſions, that "they ſhould believe a lie, becauſe they received "not the love of the truth, that they might be "ſaved, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs." And this very reaſon is aſſigned by Scripture itſelf, when foretelling the apoſtacy of the latter times under Antichriſt, or the Pope of Rome. He is deſcribed in ſtrong and ſtriking characters, as the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, as the Myſtery of Iniquity, as the Whore of Babylon, which ſitteth on ſeven mountains *; "whoſe coming is with all de-"ceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs," and "who, as "God, ſitteth in the temple of God, ſhewing him-"ſelf that he is God, and who exalteth himſelf above

P

* Rev. chap. 17. Every one muſt perceive this ſtriking feature of reſemblance, which is intended for a kind of key; as it is well known, that the famous city of Rome was built upon ſeven hills.

It might have been not only fatal to St John, but to Chriſtianity itſelf, had the Apoſtle in an explicit manner foretold the ruin of the Roman empire then in its glory, on the fall of which Popery was to rear up its head. Prophecy in general is fitly wrapped up in figurative language, and attended with ſome degree of obſcurity, which, however, comes to be cleared away by the accompliſhment. The Apocalypſe, that myſterious book, ſo full of cæleſtial machinery, is intermingled with a great variety of ſcenes, which are *now*, after what our eyes have ſeen, evidently applicable to and deſcriptive of the church of Rome.

" above all that is called God*." Daniel, St Paul, and St John, paint this object in ſuch glaring colours, and with ſuch ſurpriſing particularity, as now to leave no room for dubiety in the application †.

The ſeeds of Popery were ſown ſo early as in the Apoſtle's days, by heretics who ſtarted up to corrupt the goſpel of Chriſt. Therefore we find them ſpeaking of and condemning " A voluntary humi-
" lity and worſhipping of angels, an adulterating
" and handling the Word of God deceitfully; the
" making a gain of godlineſs, and teaching for
" filthy lucre's ſake, the forbidding to marry, a
" fooliſh abſtaining from meats, and neglecting of
" the body; a vain obſervation of new moons and
" feſtivals; the building upon the foundation of
" the goſpel, gold, ſilver, precious ſtones, wood,
" hay, ſtubble, the doctrines, traditions, and com-
" mandments of men." Theſe, and other corruptions and innovations were ſoon introduced into the Chriſtian church, which made St Paul ſay, " The myſtery of iniquity doth already work ‡."

St

* The Pope of Rome aſſumes Divine titles, holineſs and infallibility, and is frequently ſtiled thus, " Our Lord God
" the Pope; another God upon earth, King of kings, and
" Lord of lords." Of him it is ſaid, " That the dominion
" of God and the Pope is the ſame: That the power of the
" Pope is greater than all created power, and extends itſelf
" to things cæleſtial, terreſtrial and infernal: That the Pope
" does whatever he pleaſeth, even things unlawful, and is
" more than God." In this blaſphemous manner do Popiſh writers expreſs themſelves, for which they are rewarded, and ſome acts of councils run in the ſame impious ſtrain. *Vide* Biſhop Jewel's Apology and Defence; and Barrow's Treatiſe on the Pope's ſupremacy.

† This topic is well illuſtrated by Dr Newton in his Diſſertations on the Prophecies, Vol. II. Diſſ. 22, 23.

‡ 2 Theſſ. ii. 7.

St John obſerves the ſame thing, and declares, "This is that ſpirit of Antichriſt whereof you "have heard, that it ſhould come, and even now "already is it in the world*."

A long time, however, was to paſs over before the ſuperſtructure of Popery could be compleated. And therefore the inſpired Apoſtle further adds on this very ſubject, "He who now letteth will let, "until he be taken out of the way;"—"And "then ſhall that wicked one be revealed; even "him, whoſe coming is after the working of Sa-"tan, with all power, and ſigns, and lying won-"ders †." Now it is generally agreed, that what hindered or poſtponed the full diſplay of Papal power, was the Roman empire, whilſt it ſtood firm and reſpectable. This explication was, in all probability, given by Paul to the Theſſalonians, as well as to other Chriſtians, and the tradition was tranſmitted from age to age. Hence it was, that the primitive Chriſtians were wont to pray in the public offices of the Church for the peace and proſperity of the Roman empire, as knowing that when this ſhould be diſſolved, the empire of Antichriſt would be raiſed upon its ruins.

It is very remarkable, that even before the event, the fathers uſed to ſpeak of Antichriſt, and the Man of Sin, as one and the ſame thing, and to view matters in this point of light. *Juſtin Martyr*, who lived about the middle of the ſecond century, as alſo *Irenæus*, conſider the *Man of Sin* as entirely the ſame with the *Little Horn* mentioned in Daniel, and deſcribe the fraud, the pride, and tyranny of Antichriſt ‡. Tertullian, who flouriſhed toward the

* 1 John iv. 3. † 2 Theſſ. ii. 7, 8, 9.

‡ Juſt. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 250. Iren. Adverſus Hæreſes, lib. 5. cap. 25.

the end of the ſame century, when expounding that paſſage of Paul's prophecy, "He who letteth will "let, until he be taken out of the way," makes this memorable obſervation, "What can this be "but the Roman ſtate, the diviſion of which into "ten kingdoms will bring on Antichriſt, and then "ſhall the evil one be revealed *."

Many other venerable fathers expreſs themſelves in the ſame manner, and with a certain air of aſſurance.

Now we know, that the Roman empire was ſwallowed up by the northern nations who broke into it. As their power increaſed from time to time, ſo that of the Emperor declined, till at laſt it was wholly abſorbed: And in proportion to this, did the Biſhops of Rome rear up their heads, come as it were in room of the Emperors, and fix their reſidence in the ſame ſeat of government.

The Gothic Princes did very much contribute to advance the grandeur and ſpiritual monarchy of the Pope. Long before this time, the Chriſtian Clergy had artfully propagated an opinion, that they had ſucceeded to the Jewiſh prieſthood, and were therefore intitled to the ſame honours and emoluments. The Biſhop of Rome came to be conſidered as the great High Prieſt, and inferior orders, as Prieſts and Levites. This proved a fruitful ſource of wealth and dignity. Now in the eighth century, the Roman Pontif pretended to be Chriſt's *Vicar*, the Vicegerent of God, and Repreſentative of heaven.

The better to make good his pretenſions among a ſuperſtitious people, he armed theſe with all the thunder of excommunication againſt ſuch as ſhould rebel. This was a tremenduous miſchief to the northern

* Tertull. de Reſurrect. Carnis, cap. 24. p. 340.

thern nations, who conſidered it as of equal horror with the dreadful interdicts of their Druids *, and that indeed was the ſevereſt of all puniſhments. This idea was eagerly graſped by the aſpiring Biſhops of Rome, and improved into cruel practice, which was often productive of bloodſhed, war, and maſſacre. A pontifical anathema, not only excluded ſuch againſt whom it was levelled from the communion of the Church, but forfeited to them their civil rights, confiſcated their eſtates, and deprived them of all the privileges of humanity. This device kept all in awe, and greatly advanced the Papal power.

The barbarous nations who conquered the Romans, had been always accuſtomed to look up to their Augurs and Druids as almoſt exalted above the human ſpecies: They beheld them with ſingular reverence, paid them a kind of implicit obedience, and were regulated by them in peace and war †. Upon their converſion to Chriſtianity, they

* Si qui aut privatus aut publicus Druidum decreto non ſtetit, ſacrificiis interdicunt. Hæc pæna eſt apud eos graviſſima. Quibus ita eſt interdictum, ii numero impiorum et ſceleratorum habentur, iis omnes decedunt, aditum eorum ſermonemque defugiunt, ne quid ex contagione incommodi accipiant; neque iis petentibus jus redditur, neque honos ullus communicatur. Cæſar, de Bello Gallico, lib. 6. cap. 13.

This paſſage, with others that might be quoted from different authors, may ſerve to ſhew the origin of Papal excommunication in Europe.

† Jul. Cæſ. de Bello Gallico, lib. 5. cap. 13.—"Druides "magno ſunt apud eos (Celtas) honore: Nam fere de omni- "bus controverſiis, publicis privatiſque conſtituunt: Et ſi "quod eſt admiſſum facinus, ſi cædes facta, ſi de hereditate, "ſi de finibus controverſia eſt, iidem decernunt, præmia, pæ- "naſque conſtituunt. Si qui aut privatus, aut publicus eorum "decreto non ſtetit, ſacrificiis interdicunt."

Tacitus

they readily transferred this religious veneration to the ſacerdotal order in the Chriſtian church, and contemplated the ſplendor and authority of the Roman Pontif in particular, with a ſort of ſuperſtitious reverence, whom they would conſider as the great Arch-Druid.

Hence it was, that accumulated honours and riches were poured into the Church, with a liberal and laviſh hand. Hence it was, that the Popes of Rome roſe to ſuch a ſummit of eccleſiaſtical authority, as alſo of temporal power and grandeur. The leaders of the northern nations divided their conqueſts amongſt their followers, and proportioned a diſtribution of lands according to the merit of their principal officers, reſerving to themſelves a title of ſuperiority, and a right of ſummoning all their vaſſals to war, who were obliged to military ſervice, according to the Feudal ſyſtem, which they introduced into Europe. At ſame time they were jealous of an increaſe of power amongſt theſe fierce and warlike chieftains, ſome of whom might be tempted to ſhake off all dependence.

The Gothic kings therefore judged it a proper and prudent ſtep, to beſtow upon Chriſtian Biſhops, ſome ſhare of that immenſe property which they had acquired, and to exalt them to high rank and authority, as a check upon the riſing power of their own nobles, and as a counterbalance to all their projects of ambition. Thus their profuſion of favour to the Church, might proceed from policy as well as from ſuperſtition. Accordingly, the riches and honours of the Chriſtian Church were vaſtly

Tacitus de Mor. Germanorum, cap. 7. p. 384. ſays of theſe Druids,—"Neque enim animadvertere, neque vincire, neque "verberare quidem, niſi ſacerdotibus permiſſum, non quaſi "ad pœnam, nec ducis juſſu, ſed velut Deo imperante."

vaſtly augmented, eſpecially in the weſt, during the eighth century. Churches were rendered moſt ſuperb and magnificent, convents and monaſtries were enriched without end or meaſure. Extenſive territories, royal domains, cities, caſtles, palaces, and whole provinces were conferred upon the dignitaries of the Church, with all the rights and prerogatives peculiar to Princes themſelves. Many of them were elevated to the rank of nobility, and were created Dukes, and Counts; and ſome of them were ſolemnly inveſted with ſovereign authority. * By this vaſt acceſſion of power, opulence, and honour, they were enabled to raiſe mighty armies, to maintain expenſive wars, and ſome of thoſe holy eccleſiaſtics, though inconſiſtently with their ſacred pacific profeſſion, led on their own troops to battle. † This proved the unfortunate occaſion of thoſe violent diſorders and deſolations which afterwards diſturbed the repoſe of Europe, concerning the Regalia, and Inveſtitures.

The church of Rome, ever watchful to its intereſts, did not fail to improve theſe advantages for aggrandizing and enriching itſelf. She artfully ſpread an opinion about this time, that God Almighty would regulate the rewards and puniſhments of a future ſtate, according to the liberality ſhewn to ſaints and prieſts, and to the donations made

* This well accounts for the high rank and wealth of the Epiſcopal order, which to this day ſubſiſts not only in Catholic but Proteſtant kingdoms, and for the denomination of Eccleſiaſtical princes, as well as of ſecular, of Lords ſpiritual and temporal.

Many of the ancient Archbiſhoprics and Biſhoprics have been ſecularized and converted into duchies ſince the Reformation, particularly, Oſnaburg, Bremen, Magdeburg, Halberſtat, Minden, Lubec.

† Wilkin's Concilia Magnæ Britanniæ, tom. 1. p. 90, 91.

made to monaſtries and churches. Thus a new method of atonement for ſin was pointed out. Penances and penalties could be diſpenſed with in this life, and in the next, hell might be avoided and heaven obtained, by a handſome ſum of money, or by appropriating a good eſtate to the church. This notion ſoon prevailed in thoſe times of Gothic ignorance and ſuperſtition, and produced powerful effects. It drew within the *vortex* of the church immenſe treaſures. The moſt opulent were generally the moſt guilty; they of all others chiefly dreaded and could leaſt endure the ſhame or rigour of eccleſiaſtical diſcipline, and they were beſt able to buy themſelves off, and to give the ſatisfaction that was properly wanted.

This filled the coffers of the clergy ſo faſt, that the ingenious device has never been dropped to this day; and this ſpiritual engine, erected for temporal purpoſes, is ſtill played off in Roman-catholic countries, with wonderful ſucceſs.

Although it was in the eighth century, that Popery thus reared up its head in a triumphant manner, yet many other previous circumſtances concurred towards its riſe and eſtabliſhment. It muſt be remembered, that when Chriſtianity was firſt introduced into the world, the new converts to it were neceſſarily made up from among Jews and Gentiles. All mankind came to be comprehended within the bounds of this twofold diſtinction. But however different in many reſpects the Jewiſh and Heathen nations were, and however different in a particular manner their objects of worſhip might be, yet they were both remarkably attached to external rites and ceremonies, and too much captivated with the charms of religious ſplendor. Many of both, when they embraced Chriſtianity, ſtill retained ſome affection for their reſpective rites and uſages.

uſages. The Jews, for inſtance, inſiſted on the continuance of circumciſion, and the Heathens upon bowing to the eaſt, if not to a riſing ſun, yet at the name of Jeſus, the riſen Saviour. The pureſt profeſſion in the world, the Goſpel itſelf, admits of ſomething external in religion, and preſcribes ſome poſitive inſtitutions. Hence an undue liberty was taken by many, of conjoining with Divine Revelation, the fond and fanciful additions of human invention. This is the grand maſterwork and pillar of Popery.

Pretexts would not be wanting to give a colour and ſoftening to ſuch innovations. Sometimes they were repreſented as indifferent, at other times expedient, again as enjoined by authority, or ſanctified by cuſtom. Theſe ſtole imperceptibly almoſt into the Church, were multiplied in a gradual manner, and met with too warm a reception, as being agreeable to vulgar notions, and foſtering the prejudices of mankind. Cunning and crafty men were at hand to lull and gratify the deluded multitude. Falſe philoſophers and deſigning prieſts adulterated genuine Chriſtianity by ſpurious mixtures, and introduced numberleſs new notions, erroneous tenets, and vain ceremonies, ſo as to compleat a finiſhed ſyſtem of ſuperſtition. In this work of will-worſhip, in this enterprize of fabricating religion for ſecular purpoſes, the Roman Pontif always aſſumed a ſovereign lead.

He enjoyed peculiar advantages above any of his brother Biſhops in chriſtendom. He poſſeſſed more wealth, lived in greater ſplendor, and appeared with a more numerous retinue. Theſe marks of magnificence, though very diſtinct from thoſe of true religion, were often confounded with it, by the misjudging multitude. Their eyes were dazzled with ſpectacles of ſhew and grandeur, their

judgments influenced by the opinion and practice of thoſe who moved in an orb ſo far ſuperior to them, they were eaſily ſubjected to their authority, and made dupes and tools to their artifice or ambition.

In very early times, Chriſtians were in uſe to refer matters of conteſt to ſome among themſelves eminent for their rank, knowledge, or probity, rather than expoſe their profeſſion, by going before Heathen magiſtrates. This was a wiſe Apoſtolic rule, and was prudently followed by ſuch who had a real regard for their religion. When Biſhops were elevated to a certain degree of pre-eminence, and preſided over ſeveral churches in a province, thoſe who lived under their eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction, were not unnaturally drawn in to ſubject the determination of their civil rights, when a difference or debate aroſe, to their cognizance.

But ſometimes matters were of ſuch great importance, that contending parties were deſirous to have the point decided by the higheſt authority.

It likeways often happened, that controverſies between Biſhops themſelves, or betwixt independant monaſtries aroſe. In all theſe, or ſuch ſimilar caſes, the parties at variance directed their eyes to the Biſhop of Rome, as the ſupreme Umpire.

This was an incenſe peculiarly acceptable and fragrant to the Roman Pontifs. They took every method to encourage ſuch appeals and references to the holy See, even after the civil magiſtrates were become Chriſtians, enlarged their demands, extended their prerogatives, and what was at firſt a matter of courteſy or choice, came through time to be eſtabliſhed into right and law, and was repreſented as an indiſpenſable part of the eccleſiaſtical conſtitution. This had a moſt powerful tendency to promote the credit and authority of the Romiſh

Romiſh church, and to reduce both clergy and laity under its dominion.

The Pope derived likewiſe conſiderable influence from preſiding over the metropolis of the Roman empire, and by fixing his reſidence in the imperial city. This ſpread a luſtre around him, and imparted a degree of dignity, in which he ſhone without a rival, ſo that he at laſt eclipſed the other patriarchs, even thoſe of Conſtantinople.

Rome had been the grand ſeat of government and politics, and had been accuſtomed to give laws to the whole world. When the imperial reſidence was transferred to Conſtantinople, this afforded a favourable opportunity to the aſpiring Pontifs, to engroſs into their hands a large ſhare of power, and to aſſume ſuperior majeſty. Theſe naturally appeared to center in the Pope, now that the Emperor was removed; and the declenſion of his authority in the weſt ſerved to confirm the Papal uſurpation.

This in like manner was promoted when the imperial reſidence was afterwards fixed in Germany; and that advantage was improved by the See of Rome with all the addreſs and dexterity of intrigue and ambition.

Beſides, the Roman Pontifs pretended to be the ſucceſſors of St Peter, and to inherit his title, dignity, and infallibility. They founded their ſpiritual monarchy upon a grant from heaven, and claimed univerſal dominion by a Divine decree. All this was but bold and arrogant aſſertion, but, conjoined with more weighty arguments derived fro power, intereſt, and ambition, was not without e fect amongſt the credulous and ſuperſtitious.

Neither was it forgotten, that the Biſhops Rome, during the courſe of ſeveral centuries, h diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their zeal and activi

in propagating the goſpel; and that ſome of them had endured remarkable ſufferings for the ſake of it. This was ſet forth to view with great oſtentation, and artfully diſplayed in all the pomp of panegyric and embelliſhment. It was therefore inferred, that the See of Rome, ſo ſuperior in merit, was well intitled to extraordinary reſpect, and that as ſhe had been, ſo it was deſtined ſhe ſhould ſtill continue to be the great bulwark of the Chriſtian cauſe.

Emperors themſelves incautiouſly threw additional weight into the ſcales of Papal power. They not only augmented from time to time the revenue and dignity of the Church in general, but of the Roman See in a particular manner. They thought they teſtified their regard for religion, by ennobling and enriching its miniſters, by erecting ſumptuous churches, and by endowing of monaſtries and convents in the moſt opulent manner. They converted the wealth and magnificence of Pagan prieſthood and idolatry into this new channel, and with an unſparing hand heaped up freſh ſupernumerary honours and immunities. The grandeur of the Chriſtian church was diſplayed in fulleſt form at Rome, which had been the ſeat of ſuperſtition as well as of empire, and every thing relating to religion was tranſacted there, with all imaginable ſtate and ſolemnity. The Pope took the lead on all public occaſions; and by permiſſion of the Emperors, not only conveened, but alſo preſided in the councils. Even theſe mighty monarchs reſpected the authority, courted the friendſhip and alliance of ſo powerful a perſonage, and Charlemagne himſelf declared and adjudged,—That his Holineſs being Chriſt's vicar upon earth, could not be ſubject to the judgment of man.

On

On the other hand, the people co-incided with theſe views, but from different motives. Amongſt them an opinion prevailed, that a diviſion of power was for the ſecurity of the ſubject. The Pope's agents and emiſſaries artfully propagated this notion, with a deſign to advance the Pontifical authority; which accordingly it did. This, it was imagined, would ſerve to retrench and moderate the power of the Emperor, and prove a check to any tyrannical projects from that quarter. A fond conceit was cheriſhed that thoſe ghoſtly Fathers who pretended ſo high a regard for the ſpiritual concerns of the people, would likewiſe watch over with tenderneſs their temporal intereſts. Thus both religion and liberty would be ſecure, as they conceived, amidſt ſuch a contraſt of characters in their civil and eccleſiaſtical rulers, and under ſuch a diſtinction and diviſion of power; whilſt unſuſpicious, they ſeem to have had no apprehenſions of infringement, uſurpation, or abuſe of truſt.

The ignorance and barbariſm which was introduced by the northern nations, who had for ſeveral ſucceſſive centuries poured into the empire, and the general confuſion, turbulence and anarchy which this occaſioned, as was formerly hinted, did not a little favour the invaſions of Popery: Whilſt the darkneſs and deluſion of Mahometiſm overſpread the eaſtern provinces by the conqueſts of the Saracens.

Knowledge and learning ſerve to baniſh ſuperſtition, and wear an aſpect auſpicious to religion and liberty. Science and rational improvement can only flouriſh in times of public peace and tranquillity. They hate the noiſe and tumult of war, and droop their heads amidſt fear, and danger and diſtreſs. Yet this was the unfortunate ſituation of matters for a long time together; and the gloomy

ſeaſon

ſeaſon was artfully improved by the Popes of Rome, for the advancement of their own ambitious projects.

They endeavoured to repreſs free, rational, religious enquiry, and to recommend and cheriſh ignorance, not only as the mother of devotion, agreeably to that Popiſh maxim, but as of ſingular utility for certain ſecular purpoſes. It is indeed ſurpriſing to find, that the council of Carthage held even about the year 400, did ſolemnly prohibit the reading of all Heathen authors. It was pretended that this might infect the mind with dangerous opinions. Even Biſhops themſelves were therefore excluded. And this method was preferred to a regular refutation of any wrong principles or notions that could be propoſed.

The Roman Pontifs availed themſelves of every promiſing circumſtance, and in the progreſs of things many various occurrences interveened, which gave a ſpring to their ambition and ſucceſs to their efforts. When the alluring proſpects of power, wealth, and grandeur, concenter in the breaſt of ſuch an exalted Eccleſiaſtic, who is crafty, deſigning and ambitious, it is not difficult to imagine what wide ſtrides, what quick advances ſuperſtition and tyranny may make in his reign, much more upon a ſucceſſion of many ſuch. Special care therefore is taken to ſecure perſons of this ſtamp for the Pontifical office. This high dignity is not hereditary, which would ſubject it to many unfavourable chances. It is conferred by election upon a perſon of experience, and who has been well tried, and by the conclave of Cardinals themſelves. He muſt be of their body, and have two-thirds of their votes, and every circumſtance of caution and ſecurity is minutely attended to.

The

The celibacy of the Clergy, which is a maſterpiece of Papal policy, is of ſingular advantage here, by preventing family-connections, and drawing more effectually the attention of the holy chair to the common concerns of the Church. Indeed it gives a wonderful union and community of intereſt to the whole Roman-Catholic *Hierarchy*, the members whereof compoſe one mighty republic, under the direction of a ſupreme head, who is both a ſpiritual and temporal monarch.

We have had occaſion to remark the general prevalence of error, ſuperſtition and ignorance in the eighth century. Of this *Charlemagne* was extremely ſenſible; and being a Prince of great perſonal abilities, and entertaining an ardent paſſion for the arts and ſciences, in which he himſelf was conſiderably accompliſhed, he made ſome attempts to propagate them in his dominions. He drew together ſuch men as were any way diſtinguiſhable for literature, cauſed cathedral and monaſtic ſchools to be erected in various provinces, and encouraged a taſte for knowledge and improvement. But his good intentions were far from being crowned with proportional ſucceſs. In thoſe times few could be found of real genius or extenſive erudition; and the beſt ſyſtem of learning was confined, perplexed, and metaphyſical, very little calculated to refine the mind, or to correct the manners of mankind. Europe in general was then enwrapt in miſts of groſſeſt ignorance, almoſt impervious to the rays of truth, which could not be diſſipated by the feeble efforts of ſome ſingle authors. The venerable Bede is indeed juſtly celebrated as an author of diſtinguiſhed eminence. He was born in England, *A. D.* 672, and by his publications in the eighth century acquired great reputation. He wrote on a vaſt variety of ſubjects, both of a civil and

and eccleſiaſtical nature, but very few cotemporary geniuſes appeared, either to ſtand forth as rivals, or to aid him in his literary purſuits.

Charlemagne himſelf formed a project of at once extending his conqueſts, and of propagating the light of truth and Chriſtianity. About this time the Saxons were a numerous and powerful people who poſſeſſed a conſiderable part of Germany. They were addicted to war, given to frequent conteſt and revolt, and proved the occaſion of much diſturbance in the empire. He directed his arms againſt them, hoping both to ſubject them to his government, and to won them over to his religion. They were a fierce and valiant nation, zealous for liberty, and warmly attached to the idolatry of their anceſtors. During a war of ſome years continuance, they exerted themſelves with ardour and bravery, but were at laſt ſubdued and converted. To prevent their defection from Chriſtianity, which they had embraced with evident reluctance, Charlemagne erected churches, monaſtries, and ſchools amongſt them, and appointed biſhops and prieſts to preſide over and inſtruct them. He was likewiſe victorious over the Huns in Pannonia, who were conquered by the force of his arms, and by his means gained over to the faith of the goſpel.

He had a high veneration for the Holy Scriptures, which he conſidered as the grand magazine of univerſal knowledge, encouraged all to the ſtudy of them, employed the learned *Alcuin* to correct any errors which had crept into them, and ſpent ſome of his leiſure hours in the laſt part of his life in this pious undertaking. Some too attribute to him the firſt German tranſlation of the Holy Bible.

Still, however, ignorance, corruption and wickedneſs prevailed among all ranks to a melancholy degree, the religion of Jeſus was not properly apprehended

prehended in its genuine meaning and import, the obligations of morality were groſsly violated by the looſe lives of its profligate profeſſors, and real piety was obſcured, or rather extinguiſhed amidſt an enormous multiplication of ſuperſtitious rites and ceremonies.

The adorning of churches and chapels with images, and the idolatrous worſhip of them, was now carried to an extravagant pitch, and occaſioned the moſt violent commotions. This ſuperſtitious practice had crept into the Church a long time before. Curious ſtatutes, images, and pictures were hung around in public places of worſhip, chiefly repreſenting our Saviour, his Virgin Mother, ſaints and martyrs. At firſt, this was conſidered as merely ornamental, and ſaid to preſerve the memory of ſacred perſons and things. Afterwards they were contemplated with peculiar marks of ſuperſtitious reſpect, and at laſt this degenerated into direct adoration. Hereupon both Jews and Saracens upbraided the Chriſtians with the ſin of idolatry.

The Roman Pontifs in general contended for image-worſhip; and we find the Grecian Emperors oppoſing them about the beginning of the eighth century in the warmeſt manner. Philippicus Bardanes did, in conjunction with the Patriarch of Conſtantinople, order ſome pictures to be pulled down there, and likewiſe ſent injunctions to *Conſtantine* the reigning Pope, to remove all images and pictures from the churches at Rome. The lordly Prelate not only diſobeyed the Emperor's mandate, but aſſembled a council in that city, which by his command proteſted againſt the imperial edict, and with ſingular arrogance condemned *Bardanes* himſelf as an apoſtate. This produced violent contentions and tumults, which termi-

nated in a revolution fatal to the Emperor, and even ſhook him from the throne *.

The Emperors Leo the Iſaurian, and his ſon Conſtantine Copronymus, were equally zealous and more reſolute. They publiſhed expreſs laws for the entire ſuppreſſion of this idolatrous practice. The Clergy, on the other hand, ſtood up for the continuance of it, as ſerving for an engine of ſuperſtition in their hands, and as proving a ſource of opulence to their order. The people, miſled by their inſinuations and authority, and fond of external ſhew and ceremony in worſhip, conſidered the conduct of the Emperors as an attack upon religion itſelf. They were taught to believe, that as theſe were ſolemnly declared apoſtates, this abſolved the ſubjects from their allegiance, and left them at liberty to proſecute their own independent rights.

Upon this a civil war broke out in Aſia, in the iſlands of the Archipelago, as likewiſe in Italy.

The Emperors were highly incenſed at theſe tumultuous proceedings, and particularly againſt the Roman Pontifs, who were the principal authors of all theſe commotions. They thereupon ſeized on the riches, and confiſcated the lands which belonged to the church of Rome in Sicily, Apulia, and Calabria, and in the provinces of Illyricum, withdrew the Clergy from their ſubjection to the See of Rome, and brought them under the eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction of the Patriarch of Conſtantinople. No argument whatever could ever prevail on the Greek Emperors to reſtore ſo rich a ſpoil to the Roman Pontifs; and this concurred with other circumſtances to inflame jealouſies, and to widen the breach betwixt them and the Biſhops of Conſtantinople,

* Moſkeimi Eccleſ. Hiſt. Engl. by Dr Maclain, vol. II. p. 73.

ſtantinople, which at laſt ſevered the Greek and Latin churches from one another.

The Britons, Germans, and Gauls were of opinion, that images might be lawfully preſerved in the churches, but that all adoration of them was highly ſinful and impious. Charlemagne entertained the ſame ſentiments, and he employed ſome learned divines to write upon the ſubject, and to ſtate the matter in a clear and accurate point of light.

Several councils were conveened at different times in order to determine this important point. One was held at Conſtantinople *A. D.* 754, conſiſting of 338 Biſhops, who made a decree againſt the worſhip of images. But another was afterwards aſſembled at Nice, in the year 787, by whoſe authority images and pictures were allowed, and the adoration of them was encouraged. Charlemagne was diſpleaſed with this determination, and ſummoned a council in the year 794. It ſat at Francfort, and conſiſted of 300 Prelates, who carefully canvaſſed this ſerious ſubject, and unanimouſly condemned the worſhip of images. The controverſy, however, ſtill continued in the Church, and occaſioned much diſſention and diſturbance.

Another conteſt likewiſe aroſe upon a myſterious point of doctrine, which related to the derivation of the Holy Ghoſt. The Latin Church maintained, that the Divine Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son, whilſt the Greeks aſſerted its proceſſion from the Father only. This matter was agitated with great warmth by the contending parties, and ſerved to facilitate the ſchiſm between the weſtern and eaſtern churches.

This roſe to a more open rupture in the ninth century, which at laſt ended in an abſolute ſeparation.

The

The Emperor Michael did, in the year 858, deprive Ignatius of the patriarchate of Conſtantinople, and ſent him into exile. He advanced Photius, a man of extraordinary learning, in his place, and a council held at Conſtantinople approved of this meaſure. Thereupon Ignatius thought proper to appeal to Pope Nicolas I. who eſpouſed his cauſe, and took upon him to excommunicate Photius. He on the other hand returned the compliment, and in a council aſſembled at Conſtantinople got it declared, that Nicolas was fallen from the pontifical dignity, and that his authority was to be no more acknowledged. The provinces which had been formerly wreſted from the See of Rome were ſtill held faſt in ſubjection to that of Conſtantinople; and tho' a ſolemn embaſſy had been ſent by the Roman Pontif, to demand the reſtoration of them, this was refuſed, and the propoſal treated with contempt.

Baſilius, the ſucceeding Emperor, recalled Ignatius from baniſhment, and re-inſtated him in his former dignity, whilſt he confined Photius in a monaſtry. The degraded Patriarch was exaſperated at this treatment; and by his intrigue and influence formed a powerful party againſt the Biſhops of Rome, and charged them with Hereſy. Upon the death of Ignatius, the Emperor again promoted Photius to the See of Conſtantinople, who ſtill retained warm reſentments of temper and ambition unfavourable to the See of Rome, and which miniſtred freſh feuel to the flame already kindled. Such is the precarious nature of human affairs, that Photius was again depoſed by the ſucceeding Emperor. But the haughty Pontifs at Rome not ſatisfied with this, moſt unreaſonably required that all the Biſhops and Prieſts who had been ordained by Photius ſhould be degraded. This arrogant demand the

the Greek Church would not ſubmit to on terms. This occaſioned further diſputes and moſities, and greatly increaſed the jealouſy miſunderſtanding which had ſo long ſubſiſted between the eaſtern and weſtern churches.

About the year 830, a new and famous controverſy ſprang up, relating to the holy Euchariſt. Paſcaſius Radbert, abbot of Corbey, publiſhed a book concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Therein he maintained, that after the prieſt had conſecrated the elements of bread and wine, nothing remained of them but the external figure; and that under this the real body of Chriſt was locally preſent. He further affirmed, that this ſacramental body of Chriſt was the very ſame that had been born of the Virgin, that had ſuffered upon the croſs, and which roſe from the grave. This unheard-of doctrine created general aſtoniſhment; and as it was full of the moſt palpable abſurdity, one would have thought that it would have been univerſally exploded. Yet ſuch was the force of ſophiſtry, prieſtcraft, and ſuperſtition in thoſe ages of ignorance, that it met with many abettors. The church of Rome, novel and ridiculous as it was, came to eſpouſe and defend it, till at laſt it was eſtabliſhed into a fundamental article of the Catholic Creed. Yet there were many who warmly oppoſed the introduction of this monſtrous tenet. Charles the Bald appointed ſome learned divines to examine the ſubject, and to explain it in a juſt and proper way. This order of the Emperor was executed in a maſterly manner by Johannes Scotus, a writer, who ſurpaſſed moſt of his cotemporaries for knowledge, perſpicuity, and preciſion. He plainly declared, and endeavoured by clear, irrefragable arguments to evince, that the conſecrated bread and wine in the Euchariſt, were only ſigns and

and ſymbols of the abſent body and blood of the Lord. Whilſt he ſhewed that theſe were repreſented ſolely in a figurative manner by the ſacred elements; he alſo pointed out the unanſwerable objections which lay againſt the ſtrange doctrine of tranſubſtantiation *.

About this time a controverſy of a different nature aroſe, which has been continued through ſucceſſive centuries to this time, which has occaſioned much ſpeculation and debate, and many polemical productions. It related to Grace and Predeſtination, and was firſt ſtarted by Godeſchalchus a German of the monaſtic order. He maintained that God had from eternity predeſtinated ſome to everlaſting life, and others to everlaſting miſery: That the Almighty did not really will or deſire the ſalvation of all mankind, but only that of the elect; and that Chriſt did not die for the whole human race, but only for thoſe whom God had preordained to eternal happineſs.

Some attribute the ſame opinions to St Auguſtine; and the Benedictines, Janſeniſts, and Auguſtine monks generally lean this way, and defend Godeſchalcus, whilſt the Jeſuits condemn him. Many of his followers endeavour to mollify matters, and to colour over his doctrine by certain explanations. They only aſſert, that God has decreed to perpetual puniſhment ſuch whom he foreſaw would prove wicked and impenitent, and that their ruin is determined in conſequence of their voluntary commiſſion of ſin, which was foreſeen from eternity; that the death of Chriſt, conſidered in itſelf, extends equally to all mankind, but that its ſaving effects belong only to the elect. If theſe were the ſoftenings of a friend, the enemies of Godeſchalcus

* This is done in a triumphant manner by Archbiſhop Tillotſon, Serm. 26.

chalcus exaggerated matters on the other hand, and particularly Rabanus Maurus his implacable adverſary. Theſe accuſed him of moſt dangerous errors, and as teaching that God Almighty had not only excluded ſome from eternal life by an irreverſible decree, but had likewiſe predeſtinated a great part of mankind to everlaſting damnation, whilſt at ſame time he conſtrained them by a fatal neceſſity, to commit thoſe crimes which deſerved this puniſhment. Various councils were conveened, in order to determine this controverſy, in ſome of which the author was defended and juſtified, and in others condemned. The council, which ſat at Quiercy *A. D.* 849, treated him in a cruel manner; and Hincmar, Archbiſhop of Rheims, degraded him from the prieſthood, and was ſo inhumane as to order him to be ſcourged. This was executed with great indecency and barbarity in preſence of the Emperor; and the force of pain compelled the unfortunate ſufferer to commit to the flames that juſtification of his doctrine, which he had ſometime before preſented to the council of Mentz. He ſoon thereafter died in priſon, maintaining to the laſt moments of his life the tenets he had taught. But the injurious methods of violence and puniſhment by which he was perſecuted cannot be vindicated on any principles of humanity or religion; nay, they ſerve to reproach the ferocity of his adverſaries, and the blind zeal and ſeverity of the times.

Various attempts were made in the *ninth* century, to ſpread the goſpel into heathen countries. Charlemagne had exerted himſelf in this good work, but his religious endeavours were intermixed with ambition, and ſupported too frequently by warlike force, which ſullied the luſtre of his pious enterprizes. Milder methods were now uſed, and rational

rational meaſures more ſuitable to the genius of the goſpel, came to be purſued in converting barbarous nations. The Bulgarians, Bohemians, and Moravians were gained over to Chriſtianity, as alſo the warlike Ruſſians, who had ſome time before fitted out a formidable fleet, by which they ſtruck with terror Conſtantinople, and ſpread a general conſternation through the empire.

About the year 867, the *Sclavonians*, and ſeveral provinces in Dalmatia, ſent a ſolemn deputation to Conſtantinople, voluntarily offering ſubjection to the Greek Emperors, and declaring their readineſs to embrace the goſpel. The embaſſy was received with ſingular ſatisfaction, and Chriſtian doctors were immediately ſent into thoſe parts, in order to inſtruct and baptize the people.

Theſe converſions, it muſt be owned, were very imperfect at firſt. The excellent religion of Jeſus was not repreſented by the miſſionaries in all its primitive purity; and the ſavage nations ſtill retained an attachment to ſome of their ſuperſtitious rites, as to which they were too freely indulged.

The progreſs of the goſpel was, however, much obſtructed by the increaſing power of the *Saracens*. They had ſubdued a great part of Aſia and Africa, and, in this century, made themſelves maſters of Spain, Sardinia, and Sicily, ſo that Rome itſelf trembled at the ſight of their victorious arms. This was not all. About the year 857, the Normans, Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians poured into Germany, Italy, France, and Britain, and ſpread horror and devaſtation wherever they came. Their firſt object was only to plunder theſe rich provinces, but, charmed with their beauty and fertility, they often formed ſettlements in the countries which they over-ran; nor were the European Princes always able to expel them: And even Charles the

the Bald found himſelf obliged to make a conſiderable reſignation to them.

Amidſt theſe ſcenes of confuſion and ſuperſtition, ignorance and licentiouſneſs prevailed to a lamentable degree, not only amongſt the Laity but Clergy. The biſhops lived in luxury, frequented courts, entered into cabals and factions, and ſhamefully neglected the functions of their Epiſcopal office. The inferior prieſthood imitated their example, and abandoned themſelves to indolence, intemperance, and almoſt every ſpecies of vice. Many of the ſacerdotal order were ſo wretchedly ignorant, as not to be capable either of reading or writing, far leſs of compoſing with any propriety.

Knowledge and learning were not the taſte of the times. Even thoſe of noble rank were groſsly deficient in this reſpect, and many of them who wanted talents to ſhine in their own proper ſphere, betook themſelves to the Church, as a ladder to preferment and wealth. The patrons who had a right of nominating to the vacant benefices, often preſented ſuch, and others of a ſimilar character, however unqualified and unworthy. In proceſs of time a ſcandalous abuſe crept in, of even preſenting laymen, who increaſed from their connections and by their licentious practice, the freedoms and corruption of the eccleſiaſtical order. Beſides, what farther contributed to ſuch depravation was this, that multitudes of the Clergy, particularly Biſhops and Abbots, actually held their lands and fortreſſes by a feudal tenure. In conſequence of this, they ſtood bound to furniſh a quota of troops in time of war, and to appear at the head of them. This occaſioned great diſſipation, drew off the miniſters of religion from an attention to their proper office, gave them a ſecular turn, and expoſed them to many temptations.

A general inverſion of character prevailed, which confounded the moſt important diſtinctions and profeſſions of life. In this century we have to remark farther prepoſterous proceedings. For a long time before, the monaſtic ſtate had been held in high veneration. But now, this roſe almoſt to a pitch of epidemical madneſs. Kings, Dukes, Counts, and Marquiſſes, laid aſide their ſounding titles, deſpiſed the offices of their high ſtation, retired from the grandeur of thrones and courts, and buried themſelves in convents and monaſtries. Italy, Germany, France, and Spain, exhibited ſeveral examples of this ſuperſtitious extravagance; as if the Almighty could not be ſerved in every ſtation of life; or, as if the Higheſt did not afford the moſt ample opportunity, for promoting the intereſts of virtue and the welfare of mankind, where there is at bottom a real principle of religion.

On the other hand, one might have ſeen with wonder Monks and Hermits called from their cloyſters and cells, by Princes and Emperors to the court and cabinet. Theſe holy fathers forgot their vows, abandoned their devotions and fraternities, and from ſhade and ſolitude appeared amidſt the moſt glittering ſcenes of life, aſſumed the reins and ſteered the helm of civil government. Many of the Monks and Abbots were exalted to the high rank of prime Miniſters of ſtate, or employed by Sovereigns as envoys and ambaſſadors on the moſt important occaſions.

The Roman Pontifs availed themſelves of all theſe circumſtances, and with unwearied attention ſought to enlarge the limits of their juriſdiction, and to gratify their unbounded ambition. Hitherto ſuch who were elevated to the pontifical dignity were choſen by the ſuffrage of the Biſhops, and with conſent of the people of Rome. Yet none could

could ſtep into the papal chair without the expreſs approbation of the Emperor. But this method of procedure was now altered. Charles the Bald had obtained the purple in virtue of the good offices of the Biſhop of Rome. In return for this important favour, he formally freed the Roman Pontifs from the obligation of applying to the Emperors, or waiting for their conſent. This check removed, the election of the Popes was afterwards carried on with great irregularity and confuſion; and many of them were a diſgrace to the ſacerdotal order, and only diſtinguiſhed their pontificate by flagitious crimes and enormities, or by an immoderate purſuit of deſpotic power. The diſſention and turbulence of the times proved favourable to their ambition, as contending parties had frequent recourſe to them, and warmly ſollicited their intereſt. When a terrible war broke out amongſt the poſterity of Charlemagne, and various competitors ſtood forth as rivals to one another, and claimed the empire, the Popes of Rome obtained a powerful influence, and at laſt aſſumed the ſole right of nominating to the imperial dignity. Upon this foundation, and from the actual exerciſe of it on ſeveral occaſions, they ſet up a claim for unlimited univerſal authority.

When with a lordly air they diſpoſed even of imperial thrones, their encroachments upon the Church and Clergy became more facile and practicable. Accordingly, they now began very much to circumſcribe the power of biſhops, and the authority both of provincial and general councils. The former muſt receive confirmation from them, and the latter determine finally of nothing without their permiſſion. The better to colour over and ſupport ſuch uſurpations, pious frauds and ingenious ſtratagems were deviſed. *Decretal epiſtles*, and acts of

of councils and fabulous records were forged, pretending with the greateſt effrontery to ſhew, that all this had been the practice and privilege of the Roman Prelates in the primitive ages, contrary to the moſt authentic hiſtory.

When attempts were made by men of learning and ingenuity to detect and expoſe theſe cheats and impoſitions, they were overborne by the more numerous partizans of Popery, and by the dint of eccleſiaſtical authority; and ſucceeding times were ſo deeply involved in confuſion, ignorance and ſuperſtition, as to prevent farther ſcrutiny. Thus the ſupremacy and majeſty of the Roman Pontifs, roſe upon the ruins of truth and knowledge, of religion and liberty.

Genuine Chriſtianity was little underſtood or practiſed in this century, but in room of it, erroneous tenets, ſuperſtitious practices, and devout follies were multiplied. Departed ſaints were highly regarded, and frequently addreſſed as ſo many powerful patrons and mediators, and a ſtupid veneration was paid to their bones, their cloaths, or to the ground where they were interred, as poſſeſſed of a ſacred, miraculous energy. Each family, and ſometimes ſingle perſons, had their tutelary ſaint to protect and befriend them. The Prieſts cheriſhed theſe falſe notions among the deluded people, and to gratify their boundleſs avidity for theſe imaginary benefactors, they often canonized perſons of the moſt worthleſs character, if they had any thing ſingular or fanatical in them, at other times invented fictitious names and hiſtories of pretended characters which never exiſted.

Such was the ſpirit for relic-hunting, that many undertook hazardous voyages and tedious journeys, in order to procure ſome part or appendage of departed ſaints. Any pretended remains

of

of the firſt heralds of the Goſpel, or of ma and confeſſors, were of vaſt value, and purch at an enormous price. To give a ſolemnity ſuch ſuperſtition, the diſcovery was celebrated w ſignal demonſtrations of joy, and ſometimes with the adminiſtration of the Lord's Supper.

Rites and ceremonies and feſtivals increaſed to a ſurpriſing degree; and a cuſtom now commenced of explaining the feigned uſes and purpoſes of theſe external obſervances. This opened a wide field for the excurſions of fancy and fiction, tended to ſupport the credit of lying legends, and to hold in faſter fetters of deluſion an ignorant multitude.

Churches roſe in ſplendor and magnificence, were adorned with coſtly ſtatues and images, with curious pieces of painting, or holy relics. Superb and ſumptuous altars were erected: Luſtrations, proceſſions, illuminations were multiplied to an exceſſive pitch, whilſt the Prieſts endeavoured to dazzle the eye, and to create reſpect for their order, by officiating in the moſt ſplendid robes, and by a frequent celebration of Maſſes, for the purpoſes of avarice and oſtentation.

It is obſerved by ſome, that the Latin church was much more addicted to theſe outward forms and ceremonies than the Grecian. Many of them derive their origin directly from Paganiſm. The Barbarous nations who broke into and ſhared the weſtern empire, could with great reluctancy abandon their ancient cuſtoms and manners. Nay, they retained many of them, endeavoured to propagate them among the Chriſtians with whom they incorporated, and too eaſily perſuaded the Prieſts to adopt them into the ſervice and ſyſtem of religion. Civil polity was gradually modelled according to their laws and uſages, and the tranſactions

of

of common life were ſtrongly tinctured and regulated by them.

Hence, an account may be given of the prevalence of certain rude and barbarous inſtitutions in this and the following century. None are more remarkable than thoſe ſevere and abſurd methods, which perſons were put on to clear their innocence, or to determine the point of right, in doubtful caſes *. Theſe were, the trial of the croſs, the fire ordeal, cold water, and ſingle combat: All which muſt appear ſtrange and ſhocking to us, who are accuſtomed to ſee every cauſe aſcertained and determined by examination and depoſition, by Judge and Jury, according to the courſe of a regular proceſs, and to law and practice founded upon principles of equity.

Ignorance and ſuperſtition continued to characterize the *tenth* century. The frequent tumults, diſorders, and revolutions which prevailed both in the weſtern and eaſtern world, the enthuſiaſm of the Monkiſh order, and the general indolence and profligacy of the Clergy, prevented the improvements of ſcience, as well as the progreſs of real religion. A few appeared who diſcovered a love of knowledge and made ſome feeble attempts to reſcue the age from abſolute barbariſm, but they were unequal to the arduous taſk, and laboured under manifold difficulties which they were not able to remove.

Leo

* Thoſe who held out their arms the longeſt, as if extended on a croſs,—who walked on a grate of hot iron without being burnt,— who did not float in water when thrown into it,—and who overcame in a duel,—were the juſt and fortunate perſons.

Dr Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. tranſlated into Engl. by Dr Maclain, vol. 2, p. 169, 170.

Leo the philoſopher, the Grecian Emperor, held the arts and ſciences in great admiration. In this he was even ſurpaſſed by his ſon Conſtantine Porphyrogeneta. He gave countenance to learning, and proved a generous patron and protector of genius and literature. He himſelf commenced Author, in order to animate others by his example, as well as to direct them by his ſuperior taſte and refinement.

Hiſtorians allow, that the Arabians maintained a ſingular zeal for the various branches of ſcience, and that they at this time produced ſeveral philoſophers and mathematicians, who were an ornament to their country.

What is indeed ſurpriſing, we find that Egypt, though groaning under the heavy yoke of the *Saracens*, yet paid conſiderable attention to the improvements of knowledge, and that in this country ſome eminent writers flouriſhed, particularly Eutychus Biſhop of Alexandria, who excelled both in theology and phyſic.

The face of things wore a very different aſpect among the Latins. It is generally agreed that this was their iron age, in which deep, deplorable ignorance and ſuperſtition almoſt univerſally prevailed. It was even near the concluſion of this century before the arts and ſciences which had languiſhed ſo long began to revive. Pope Sylveſter II, a native of France, may in ſome meaſure be accounted the reſtorer of learning in Europe. He was a man of a ſublime and penetrating genius, of refined taſte, and extenſive erudition, though mathematical learning was his favourite ſtudy. He endeavoured with uncommon ardour to diffuſe a taſte for ſcience and improvement, nor were his attempts and labours without ſucceſs in ſeveral places, particularly in Italy, France, and Germany. His own pro-

productions, though not to be compared with thoſe of modern times, were the admiration of the age in which he lived. His mathematical figures and problems in geometry were then viewed as ſo many magical operations, and the ingenious Pontif was regarded by ſome as a magician, and having intercourſe with the devil. * It is ſaid that Sylveſter reſided for ſome time in Spain, and was there inſtructed by the Arabian philoſophers. Their ſchools ſoon became famous, and were multiplied in different countries, to which youth afterwards reſorted for education. The writings of the Arabian doctors were tranſlated into Latin, to give them a more general ſpread, and the Spaniſh Saracens in particular, who excelled in Aſtronomy, Phyſic, Mathematics, and other branches of ſcience, are conſidered by ſome as the fathers of European philoſophy, though now ſo richly improved and enlarged.

Genuine Chriſtianity was little underſtood or practiſed at that time. This was ſtrangely corrupted by an immenſe number of fooliſh notions and ſuperſtitious ceremonies. Both Greeks and Latins placed the eſſence of religion in external forms and obſervances, in worſhipping images and praying to ſaints, in a fond ſenſeleſs veneration of ſacred relics, and in overloading with wealth the eccleſiaſtical order. The Clergy, inſtead of extirpating falſe opinions, or abſurd prejudices, nouriſhed the ſuperſtition of the multitude, were very buſy in peopling the eccleſiaſtical regions with ſaints, martyrs, and confeſſors, and mighty expert in deviſing new rites and feſtivals in honour of them. The worſhip of the Virgin Mary was now carried to an extravagant pitch; and ſome are of opinion that the Roſary, and Crown of the Virgin,

* Hiſt. Litter. de la France, tom, vi. p. 558.

Virgin, were firſt inſtituted about this time, the firſt conſiſting of fifteen repetitions of the Lord's prayer, and of an hundred and fifty *Ave Maria's*; the other of a ſmaller number.

The doctrine of purgatory was moſt zealouſly inculcated; a kind of middle ſtate, the fire of which was to purify the ſoul from all remainders of ſin. This was a dextrous ſtratagem for advancing the opulence and authority of the clergy, by whoſe interceſſions, and according to the liberality ſhewn them, the pains of that place were to be mitigated or ſhortened. The feſtival of *all ſouls*, was in this century added to the Latin Calendar, in behalf of all who were labouring under the trial of purgatory, which was at firſt introduced by the zeal of Odilo, abbot of Cluni.

The creation of ſaints was a privilege which the Pontifs of Rome claimed to themſelves. Accordingly, John XV, did, with all the ſolemnities of a formal canonization, enroll *Udalric* Biſhop of Auſburgh, among the number of departed ſaints. This was tranſacted in the year 993, and from that time forward, this new canonized ſaint was intitled to receive religious worſhip. However, we find that both before and after this, ſome Biſhops of principal rank, as well as councils, exerciſed the power of conferring ſaintſhip by their own authority. And this continued till the twelfth century, when Pope Alexander III, deprived Biſhops and councils of this God-making privilege, and declared it a peculiar prerogative of the Pontificate.

In this age of ignorance and credulity, the monks and prieſts found it no difficult matter to propagate, with ſucceſs, the moſt vain and groundleſs imaginations. None however ſtruck the world with ſuch univerſal pannic and conſternation, as the opinion which generally prevailed throughout Eu-

rope, that the day of General Judgment was near at hand, and would certainly take place at the concluſion of this century. This notion aroſe from a miſapprehenſion of a paſſage in the book of Revelation, * concerning Satan's being bound a thouſand years. This they computed from the birth of Chriſt to the preſent period. They then concluded that the devil would be looſed for a ſhort ſeaſon, after which the conflagration of the world would immediately enſue. Amazing multitudes of people were wrought upon by a firm perſuaſion of this, to abandon all their worldly concerns and connections, and to repair to the Holy Land, where they expected that Chriſt would make a ſolemn appearance, in order to judge the world. It is impoſſible to deſcribe in the moſt pathetic language, the general tremor and confuſion which were every where occaſioned among miſerable mankind. Their hearts meditated terror. Dread and trepidation invaded every breaſt. Pious ſuperſtition let looſe, multiplied fearful ſights and ſcenes without end, and converted the leaſt ſurpriſing objects or events into awful omens. An eclipſe of ſun or moon, or an airy meteor depopulated cities and villages, and made the wretched inhabitants fly for refuge to dens, and caverns, or among hills and mountains. In ſome places, temples, palaces, and houſes, were allowed to go to ruin, from a belief there would be no farther occaſion for them. The Clergy encouraged the prevailing perſuaſion, which redounded to their great emolument. The alarmed multitude flocked to the churches and altars, flung themſelves at the feet of theſe men of God, beſought their protection and prayers, and the more eaſily to obtain them, conſigned or bequeathed to the ſacerdotal orders all their wealth and eſtates,

* Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3, 4.

eſtates, which they imagined * could now be no longer uſed. Thus the Church was enriched by a vaſt acceſſion of treaſure, and of fair, extenſive poſſeſſions.

This contributed ſtill more and more to the diſſipation and licentiouſneſs of the Eccleſiaſtical Order, who were ſhamefully illiterate and immoral, both in the eaſtern and weſtern provinces. Theophylact, Patriarch of Conſtantinople, made a ſimoniacal traffic of all places and preferments in the Church. This ſpiritual paſtor, inſtead of ſetting an illuſtrious example of piety, virtue, and fidelity, was wholly devoted to luxury and pleaſure, and is ſaid to have kept in his ſtable no leſs than 2000 hunting horſes, which he fed with pignuts, dates, dried grapes, and figs ſteeped in the richeſt wines.

The Roman Pontifs, in a long ſucceſſion, exceeded every thing for wickedneſs. Not only Proteſtant but Popiſh hiſtorians declare, that many of them were monſters of vice, and ſtood chargeable with the moſt enormous crimes †. Yet ſo powerful was the reign of ſuperſtition and ignorance, that theſe ambitious Prelates ſtill encreaſed their power, and daily encroached upon the juriſdiction of Biſhops and councils, and even upon the rights of Kings and Emperors. Some ſycophants, who wanted to ingratiate themſelves into favour, publickly maintained, that the Popes were not only Biſhops of Rome, but of all Chriſtendom.

Many Biſhops and Abbots followed the example of their adventurous and aſpiring chief, and claimed extenſive powers and privileges. They inſiſted on an immunity for themſelves and their vaſſals from

* The preamble of moſt of theſe grants, runs thus—Approprinquitate mundi termino, &c.

† Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. II. p. 201. &c. Dupin's Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. II. p. 61. &c.

from the juriſdiction of the civil magiſtrate, and from all taxes and impoſts. Not ſatisfied with this, they pretended to a right of preſiding over their provinces and territories, not only in ſpiritual but temporal matters, and of being inveſted with the title and authority of Dukes and Counts of the empire. Their ambition was now more amply gratified than formerly by the ſecular Princes, to whom they addreſſed their requeſts.

Theſe ſaw, with regret, the continual conteſts which ſubſiſted between the civil governors and the eccleſiaſtical rulers. They themſelves entertained a ſecret veneration of the ſacred order; and they hoped to confirm their own dominion by a compliance in favour of ſuch, who had a commanding influence among the people. From this time forward, we find in a more particular manner, a great many of the ſacerdotal order, raiſed to civil rank and pre-eminence, diſtinguiſhed with all the titles of nobility, cloathed with characters, and engaged in offices, very remote from their ſpiritual functions.

On the other hand, it was no unuſual thing to confer eccleſiaſtical dignities on civil magiſtrates and officers of the army, who, by a ſtrange tranſmutation were converted into Prieſts and Prelates: Lay-preſentations multiplied, and the moſt ignorant and flagitious were often moſt readily promoted.

In this century the Saracens were zealous in propagating the Mahometan religion in Aſia and Africa. Many Chriſtians were unhappily ſeduced into it; and the Turks, a brave, but ſavage people, who inhabited the northern parts, near the Caſpian ſea, were prevailed on to embrace it. Still, however, they continued implacable enemies to the Saracens, aided the *Perſians*, who were oppreſſed and plundered by them, and at laſt expelled them the kingdom

kingdom of Perſia. They carried their victorious arms into other provinces ſubject to them, which they gradually ſubdued, and thus laid the foundations of the Ottoman empire, upon the ruin of that of the Saracens.

Poland embraced Chriſtianity *A. D.* 965. The goſpel obtained a more firm and ſtable footing in Ruſſia *A. D.* 987. It likewiſe ſpread its ſacred light into Hungary, Denmark, and Norway. From thence it was diffuſed into adjacent countries, alſo into Iceland and Greenland, and travelled to the Orkney iſlands, at that time under the dominion of the Norwegian princes.

Otho the Great was indefatigable in propagating the Chriſtian religion throughout the empire, particularly in Germany. With this view, he, with a pious and princely munificence, erected and endowed the biſhoprics of Magdeburgh, Meiſſen, Branderburgh, Naumburgh, and Havelberg.

Rollo, the famous pirate, ſon of a Norwegian count, heading a deſperate band of Normans, made a deſcent upon France, and ſeized ſome of the maritime provinces, particularly Bretagne and Neuſtria, now called Normandy.

The Normans were almoſt deſtitute of every ſenſe of religion; and during a great part of this century, committed cruel hoſtilities againſt the Chriſtians, and infeſted many parts of France. Nominally, however, they profeſſed the goſpel, of which they were entirely ignorant, in compliment to their warlike leader. Charles the Simple, unable to reſiſt or expel this bold invader, promiſed to aſſign to him the territory he poſſeſſed, upon condition of his embracing Chriſtianity, and eſpouſing his daughter Giſela. Theſe terms were agreed to, and an amicable accommodation was adjuſted. This Rollo was baptized Robert; and it is from him

him that the illuſtrious line of the Dukes of Normandy derives its origin.

Thus were Chriſtian princes ſometimes obliged to purchaſe peace at the expence of ſome of their dominions. To this meaſure they were more readily prompted, when by ſuch generous conceſſions they allured infidel chiefs to the faith of the goſpel, by the energy of which they hoped alſo to civilize the ferocious people who followed their ſtandards.

This proved to be the caſe in a remarkable manner with reſpect to the Normans in the *eleventh* century. Theſe rough warriors poliſhed apace after their converſion to Chriſtianity, and diſtinguiſhed themſelves by an ardent purſuit of religion and knowledge. Their magnanimous prince, *William* the Conqueror, gained a compleat victory over Harold, and at one blow obtained the crown of England *A. D.* 1066. He was accounted the Great Mæcenas of the age; and perſuaded that the moſt effectual method he could take of eſtabliſhing himſelf in his new dominions was by diſpelling ignorance and barbariſm, and ſubſtituting knowledge and inſtruction, he, for this end, invited ſome learned men among the Normans to ſettle in England.

Arts and ſciences began to revive, and public ſchools were now opened in many places, upon a more reſpectable footing than formerly, and under the direction of more able maſters.

The ſacerdotal orders of every denomination continued, however, in a courſe of corruption and degeneracy. The immenſe wealth which had flown into the Church, and the exalted honours conferred upon it, ſunk them into indolence and luxury, and made them ſhamefully to neglect the important duties of their ſacred ſtation. The Roman Pontifs ſtrained every nerve, and deviſed every ſtratagem for enlarging the limits of their authority,

rity, and by policy and perſeverance roſe to the higheſt pitch of power. They aſpired to the character of ſovereign legiſlators, and aſſerted their title to ſuperintend biſhops and councils, and to diſpoſe of all eccleſiaſtical promotions and benefices. They were addreſſed by the names of Univerſal Lords and Paſtors, and they claimed to themſelves a general juriſdiction over princes and people *.

Leo IX. was the firſt who publicly made theſe arrogant demands, and his ambitious ſucceſſors imitated his example. Yet were there not wanting ſome who oppoſed theſe high and preſumptuous pretenſions. Some biſhops and councils made a ſhew of privilege; and ſome princes endeavoured to check the career of ſuch dreadful deſpotiſm. William the Conqueror, when firmly ſeated on the throne of England, boldly aſſerted the rights of royalty, and ſometimes oppoſed the uſurpations of the Apoſtolic See.

Gerrard, Biſhop of Florence, was crowned with the Papal mitre *A. D.* 1058, and aſſumed the name of Nicolas II. He aſſembled a council at Rome in the

* The Reverend Preſident Edwards, ſpeaking of the gradual riſe of Antichriſt, ſays, That in primitive times, the Pope was only the Miniſter of a congregation; then a ſtanding Moderator of a preſbytery; then a dioceſan Biſhop; then a Metropolitan or Archbiſhop; then he became a Patriarch; then he claimed the character of Univerſal Biſhop over the whole Chriſtian Church, which was oppoſed for a while, but it was afterwards confirmed by the Emperor in the year 606. After this he aſſumed the power of a temporal Prince, and was wont to carry two ſwords, to ſignify both Spiritual and Civil authority. At length he pretended to be Chriſt's Vicegerent on earth, and to exerciſe the powers which properly belong to him, and uſed to be called God on earth, and took on him to erect kingdoms, to crown Princes, or depoſe them at pleaſure, to excommunicate private perſons, and interdict whole nations, and to diſtribute damnation or ſalvation according to his arbitrary will. *Vide* a Hiſtory of the Work of Redemption, by Mr Edwards, p. 276. 277.

the year 1059, and got a decree paſſed, changing the ancient form of electing the Pontifs. Theſe had been formerly choſen by the Cardinals, the Roman clergy, nobility and burgeſſes, with conſent of the Emperors. This often occaſioned the moſt violent tumults and animoſities in Rome, and divided Italy into continual factions. For the future the election was to proceed by the ſuffrage of the Cardinals only. Theſe originally conſiſted of the ſeven Biſhops of Rome, and of the Cardinal clerks or preſbyters, who preſided over the twenty-eight pariſhes or principal churches in Rome. Thus many of the moſt reſpectable members, who had been for time immemorial entitled to a vote, were now excluded, from pretexts of public tranquillity, whilſt ſecret views of ſacerdotal power and ambition lurked at bottom. In proceſs of time, and particularly under Alexander III. ſome others were admitted into the college of Cardinals, in order to appeaſe the reſentments kindled by the injurious edict of Nicolas.

Hildebrand, who aſſumed the name of Gregory VII. obtained the Papacy in the year 1072. He was a man of extraordinary abilities, and of unbounded ambition. He conceived a project of univerſal empire, and made wide ſtrides towards it, ſuch as muſt appear very aſtoniſhing. He poſſeſſed a ſoul ready in forming the moſt arduous ſchemes, and active to execute the moſt difficult enterprizes. He had a penetrating genius, amazing fortitude, and invincible obſtinacy. His temper was bold and arrogant, at ſame time inſidious and ſubtle. Deſtitute of virtue and religion, he ſuffered no reſtraints from dictates of conſcience, and with unabating vigour he purſued, though in the moſt lawleſs manner, all the objects of his extravagant deſires,

ſires, and all the meaſures which he imagined conducive to their accompliſhment.

He laboured inceſſantly to ſubject all Chriſtendom to the dominion of the Roman Pontif. He uſurped a power over Church and State, retrenched the privileges of biſhops and councils, that he might draw them more thoroughly into a dependance upon himſelf; and, with the ſame view, he endeavoured to exclude ſovereigns from any influence or authority over the eccleſiaſtical orders, or their proceedings, even within their own dominions. Nay, he arrogantly attempted to ſubject to the Pontifical juriſdiction all the kings and princes of the earth, and to render them and their ſubjects tributary to the See of Rome. He actually projected a plan of an annual aſſembly of biſhops to be held at Rome, in order to ſit in judgment upon Emperors and Sovereigns, and to determine the diſtribution of crowns and kingdoms. But this ſcheme of mad ambition was reſolutely oppoſed, particularly by the Emperors, and by the Britiſh and French monarchs. Such was the uncontrouled inſolence of ambition in Gregory VII. that, addreſſing himſelf to Philip I. King of France, he reminded him, that both his ſoul and kingdom were under the dominion of St. Peter, whoſe vicar and ſucceſſor he was. He pretended, that Saxony was a feudal tenure holding of the See of Rome, by a grant of Charlemagne, which could not be produced. He extended his claim to the whole kingdom of Spain, without any vouchers but Papal aſſertion and authority. And by theſe, the King of Arragon, and ſome Spaniſh princes, were actually perſuaded to pay an yearly tribute to the Pope.

He wrote a letter to William the Conqueror, demanding payment of the Peter-pence *, and ſum-

U moned

* Peter-pence was an ancient tax of one penny on every houſe in England, firſt granted *anno* 725, by *Ina* King of the Weſt Saxons, and which continued till the reign of Henry VIII.

moned him to Rome as a ſon of the Church, to do homage for the kingdom of England as a fief of the Apoſtolic See. The firſt was indeed complied with; but the latter was refuſed with a noble diſdain, and the Engliſh monarch declared, that he held his kingdom only of God and of his own ſword.

He wrote circular letters to all the princes in Germany, deſiring them to ſurrender their reſpective provinces into his hands, that they might have the honour of holding them by a grant from the Roman See, and be conſidered as her vaſſals. Wild and extravagant as ſuch a requiſition was, ſome were ſo tame and tractable as to ſubmit to it. The ſon and heir of *Demetrius* King of Ruſſia, went to Rome, declared his ſubjection and allegiance to the Pope, and received from his hands a grant of that kingdom, which in fact he was born to inherit.

This aſpiring Pontif extended his pretenſions alſo to Hungary, Poland, Norway, and Dalmatia, and inveſted ſome who were compliant with his terms with the titles and authority of kings. By his intrigues and familiarity with Mathilda, widow to Godfrey Duke of Lorrain, and the moſt opulent Princeſs in Europe, he obtained a grant of her extenſive poſſeſſions, part of which goes to this day to conſtitute the patrimony of St. Peter.

At this time, ſimony and concubinage prevailed to a prodigious degree among the eccleſiaſtical orders. Theſe Gregory, with all his might, endeavoured to reſtrain. With this view, he conveened ſeveral councils, and got the ſtricteſt edicts paſt againſt them, whilſt he confirmed, in the ſtrongeſt manner, all laws and decrees which had been formerly enacted.

In

In a council held at Rome *A. D.* 1074, it was ſolemnly determined, that all the ſacerdotal orders ſhould abſtain from marriage, and that ſuch as had at that time wives or concubines, ſhould immediately diſmiſs them, or reſign their eccleſiaſtical character. This ſevere law concerning the celibacy of the Clergy, was enforced without diſtinction, and in the moſt rigorous manner. Such as did not comply nor ſhew ready obedience, were not only ſubjected to the diſcipline of the Church, but were given over to the civil magiſtrate, to be puniſhed as rebellious ſubjects, and to be ſtript of all their worldly ſubſtance. So harſh and unreaſonable an edict, which diſſolved all matrimonial ties, blaſted the moſt tender conjugal affections, and involved parents and children in ſo much miſery, was received with the loudeſt murmuring and remonſtrance. Many prieſts choſe rather to relinquiſh their ſacred profeſſion, with all its emoluments, than cruelly abandon their beloved ſpouſes and tender offspring. Some ſeparated themſelves from the Romiſh communion, and poured obloquy and contempt upon the imperious Pontif, for ſuch arbitrary proceedings. And others excited dreadful tumults and commotions in various provinces, which did not a little diſturb the repoſe of the Papal throne. But Gregory was firm, reſolute, and intrepid in whatever meaſures he once adopted.

His deſign of extirpating ſimony was attended with ſtill greater difficulties, and proved the occaſion of the hotteſt conteſt, which embroiled both Church and State in deep diſtreſs, confuſion and war. The Emperors and Princes had been for a long time in uſe of promoting to eccleſiaſtical dignities. Theſe were now ſold to the higheſt bid in a ſcandalous manner. Thus the ſecular pr preſerved a kind of ſway and ſovereignty i

Cl

Church, at ſame time they increaſed their revenues by the ſale of eccleſiaſtical preferments. Henry IV. thought proper to oppoſe the Pope's legates, who were ſent into Germany to proſecute ſuch who had been guilty of ſimoniacal practices. This was a grand object in the view of the Roman Pontif, as his aim was not only to ſuppreſs the crime of ſimony, but to wreſt out of the hands of ſecular rulers, the inveſtitures they gave to biſhops and abbots by the ring and croſier, in conſequence of which they were conſecrated and inſtalled.

Gregory was highly exaſperated at the ungracious reception of his legates, and aſſembled another council at Rome *A. D.* 1075, which excommunicated ſeveral German and Italian biſhops, and ſome of the Emperor's prime favourites, who chiefly negotiated the traffic of ſimony. He alſo paſſed an edict, by which a ſolemn anathema was pronounced againſt all who received the inveſtiture of a biſhopric or abbacy from the hands of a layman, as likewiſe againſt thoſe who ſhould perform the inveſtiture. This alarmed and aſtoniſhed the Princes of Europe, and produced many direful calamities. The divided ſtate of the empire proved favourable to the ambitious views of the Pontif, and ſome of its Princes became attached to him. This emboldened Gregory to ſummon the Emperor to Rome to anſwer for his conduct. Such inſolent behaviour enraged Henry to the higheſt degree. In the heat of his indignation, he aſſembles a council at Worms, where the Pope was charged with many atrocious crimes, and degraded from his pontificate: At ſame time an edict was iſſued for electing another in his place.

Gregory, incenſed with ſuch unuſual contempt, thunders out his anathemas againſt the Emperor, depoſes him from the imperial throne, paſſes a ſentence

tence of excommunication upon him, and releaſes his ſubjects from their oath of allegiance. Hereupon war was declared by both parties, which ſpread its flames far and wide, and for a long time diſturbed the tranquillity of Europe.

The civil and eccleſiaſtical powers divided into two formidable factions, one of which favoured the pretenſions of the Pope, whilſt the other maintained the rights of the Emperor.

The former, aided in a particular manner by the Saxon ſtates, and Rodolphus Duke of Swabia, aſſembled at Tribur in the year 1076, in order to concert a ſcheme for the election of a new Emperor, in caſe Henry did not ſubmit to the authority of the Apoſtolic See. The armies of both parties were in the field, and ready to come to an engagement. Matters appeared to ſtand in a ſituation unfavourable for the Emperor; and by the perſuaſion of his friends, he was prevailed on to go in perſon and wait upon the Pontif. The haughty Gregory treated him with all the inſolence of contempt. For three days together he had to ſtand at the entry of the Pontif's palace, with his feet bare, and his head uncovered, and with a garment of coarſe ſackcloth. When admitted upon the fourth day, he with great difficulty obtained abſolution, but on no account would the lordly Pontif agree that he ſhould be reſtored to the throne, but left that point to be decided by the Congreſs appointed to meet at Augſburg.

The puſillanimous behaviour of Henry provoked his friends, and abated their attachment to him, whilſt the other party became more reſolute, and advanced Rodolph Prince of Swabia to the dignity of Emperor. Henry ſpurning at the Pope's propoſals, reaſſumed ſpirit, maintained the imperial title, and exerted himſelf with ardour and activity

again

againſt his rival. Many bloody battles were fought with various ſucceſs, victory ſometimes ſhifting from one ſide to the other; and theſe convulſions continued for a long time after the deceaſe of thoſe who were the original cauſes of them.

Pope Urban II. though far inferior in other reſpects, improved on the plan of Gregory's ambition, and in the famous council of *Clermont*, got a decree paſſed, prohibiting the biſhops, abbots, and reſt of the Clergy, to take any oath of allegiance to ſecular Princes. Thus he abridged the rights of the civil power, enlarged the Papal juriſdiction, drew that huge body of the ſacerdotal order into a more immediate dependence upon the See of Rome; and this ſtep added freſh fuel to the flames of war.

Amidſt theſe violent contentions for worldly wealth and dominion, the knowledge and practice of religion fell more and more into decay. Ignorance, corruption and ſuperſtition prevailed among all ranks of men. Even the monaſtic orders, notwithſtanding their pretenſions to ſuperior ſanctity, were diſſolved in ſenſuality, and addicted to the groſſeſt enormities. The Roman Pontifs were more ſollicitous to extend their own juriſdiction over them, than to promote reformation of manners. They therefore encouraged them to withdraw from ſubjection to the biſhops, and to place themſelves under the inſpection of St Peter. This greatly contributed both to the increaſe of Papal wealth and deſpotiſm. And with this view, monaſtries were vaſtly multiplied throughout Europe, upon the foundations of a perfect immunity from the juriſdiction of biſhops, and alſo of temporal princes.

The monks of Cluni roſe to a high pitch of power and influence. The Ciſtertian order was founded

founded towards the concluſion of the eleventh century, and ſpread with great rapidity through many provinces. The famous order of Carthuſians was likewiſe inſtituted in the year 1084. Theſe affected the ſtricteſt auſterity of living, and their rules of diſcipline were every way harſh and rigorous. Yet in proceſs of time, and through the increaſe of riches, the ſeverity of their cuſtoms and uſages was relaxed.

The order of Canons, which was a kind of middle rank between the monks and ſecular Clergy, had been eſtabliſhed in the eighth century. But theſe were now become moſt ſingularly diſſolute, and ran into ſuch extremes of licentiouſneſs, as to prove a public nuiſance. To reſtrain them within more decent bounds, they were ſubjected to new regulations, and obliged to conform to monaſtic rules, particularly in reſpect of living and eating in common.

Notwithſtanding the general ſpread of ſuperſtition, ignorance, and wickedneſs, yet there were ſome ſelect ſouls, men of real penetration and probity, who ſtood forth as witneſſes of the truth. Theſe had diſcernment and piety to perceive how remote the doctrines now taught were from thoſe of genuine Chriſtianity. They deeply lamented the corruptions and abuſes which had crept into the Church, the endleſs variety of vain rites and ceremonies which were obtruded, the ſcandalous lives of thoſe who called themſelves the miniſters of Chriſt, and the inſatiable avarice and ambition of the whole ſacerdotal order. They endeavoured to check the growing evil, and to bring back matters to the great original ſtandard of the goſpel. But their moſt vigorous efforts were ineffectual to accompliſh a reformation. They were over-borne by a torrent of cuſtom and authority, neither was

their

their zeal always tempered with judgment, nor were the minds of men properly prepared to receive the full light and evidence of truth.

Some learned authors appeared, who endeavoured by their theological and moral productions to clear away the rubbiſh of the times. Among theſe held a principal place the famous Berenger, Archbiſhop of Angers, who ſo warmly oppoſed the doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, and Anſelm, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, who poſſeſſed eminent talents, and excelled both in divinity and philoſophy. Theſe attempted, in a more maſterly manner, to connect faith with reaſon, and religion with philoſophy; but others ſoon grafted upon this, dry ſcholaſtic divinity, and introduced a cloudy metaphyſical ſyſtem, full of abſtruſe ideas, frivolous diſtinctions, and logical jargon, to the no ſmall detriment of real religion and ſubſtantial ſcience.

We have formerly had occaſion to remark the frequent diſputes and competitions which ſubſiſted between the Greek and Latin churches. Theſe chiefly aroſe from the unbounded ambition of the Roman Pontifs on the one hand, and the pride and jealouſy of the Patriarchs of Conſtantinople on the other. The former claimed an univerſal ſupremacy, to which the latter would by no means ſubmit, but inſiſted on a ſpiritual independency, and aſſerted a juriſdiction over the oriental biſhops and clergy.

Theſe contentions were now revived in the year 1053, by Michael Cerularius the Grecian Patriarch, an arrogant and aſpiring man. Religious pretexts were not wanting in order to inflame the controverſy, and Cerularius opened it by publickly accuſing the Latin church of various errors. He charged them with uſing unleavened bread in the celebration of maſs, with eating the blood of animal creatures, and things ſtrangled, with allowing their

their prieſts to go beardleſs, and immerging but once in the adminiſtration of baptiſm. Such were the frivolous objects of religious zeal and contention, in thoſe dark and ſuperſtitious times, which were then conſidered as matters of mighty moment.

Leo IX. highly incenſed at the charge, thought proper to aſſemble a council at Rome, and ſolemnly excommunicated the Greek churches.

Conſtantine Monochamus, the Grecian Emperor was anxious to preſerve the unity of the Church, and prevailed on the Roman Pontif to ſend legates to his imperial city, in order, if poſſible, to reſtore a good underſtanding. But they behaved with the higheſt inſolence, and unable to perſuade Cerularius to a ſubmiſſion, they formally excommunicated him and all his adherents in the church of St Sophia, and fixed a copy of their anathema upon the Grand Altar, to render it more public and ignominious. The Greek Patriarch reſented this violent ſtep by a like meaſure, and in great indignation excommunicated the legates with all their followers, and, by order of the Emperor, committed to the flames the deed of the Roman deputies. The vehement proceedings on both ſides, ſerved to inflame contending parties, to familiarize the ideas of ſeparation, and to produce an abſolute and laſting ſchiſm in the Church.

It is proper to obſerve, that the form of religious worſhip, practiſed at Rome, was not univerſally obſerved. Different provinces were diſtinguiſhed by peculiar modes of public ſervice. It was now judged decent and expedient to reduce the whole Latin Church to an entire uniformity in this reſpect. Several of the Roman Pontifs had laboured hard to accompliſh this project; but the honour of finiſhing the ſame, and giving it ſtability, was reſerved for

Gregory VII. Great, however, as was his ſpirit of enterprize and authority, he yet found conſiderable difficulties, and met with powerful oppoſition in the execution of his plan. The Spaniards, in particular, were ſtrongly attached to the ancient Gothic Liturgy, and for a long time refuſed with inflexible obſtinacy, to receive all the Romiſh ceremonies amongſt them. The nobles of *Caſtile* pitched upon an extraordinary method for deciding the controverſy. They made choice of two champions to fight in ſingle combat, one for the Roman and the other for the Gothic Liturgy. The hero for the latter proved victorious; but it was further agreed on to have recourſe to the fiery trial. Accordingly, both the Roman and Gothic Liturgies were caſt into the flames, when it ſeems, as the ſtory is told, the firſt was conſumed, and the other miraculouſly preſerved. This, in other caſes, would have been deciſive; but the Pontifs of Rome had influence to over-rule this blind determination by their ſovereign authority, and obtained their point both in Arragon and Caſtile in the year 1080.

Such was the zeal of the Church of Rome for eſtabliſhing a general uniformity, that they even preſcribed it, as an univerſal rule, that Divine worſhip ſhould be celebrated ſolely in the Latin language. When this was the mother-tongue, or well underſtood, ſuch an injunction was not unnatural.

But when this was greatly changed, and new languages were ſubſtituted among the weſtern nations, upon the declenſion of the Roman empire, ſuch an impoſition was moſt unchriſtian and unreaſonable. It was commanding men to worſhip their Maker in an unknown tongue, contrary to the expreſs appointment of Scripture, and to the very

very nature of all religious homage. Abſurd however as ſuch practice is, it was then enforced and is ſtill continued by the church of Rome, by which ignorance and indevotion are unhappily foſtered. And ſuch is the force of ſuperſtitious cuſtom, or the power of bad example, or the blind reſpect for hoary antiquity, or the artful deſigns of miſguided prieſts, that the eaſtern churches in many places practiſe the ſame thing in effect. They will not allow their religion, corrupt as it is, to be profaned by their vernacular tongue, ſo that the Chriſtians in Egypt worſhip the Deity, in the language of the ancient Copts, * the Neſtorians in the Syriac, and the Abyſſinians in the old Ethiopic, although theſe languages are become obſolete long ago, and are unintelligible to the vulgar. †

A new and moſt important ſcene opened in this century, in a grand expedition of the Chriſtians into Paleſtine, in order to recover the holy land out of the hands of infidels. The bloody flag had indeed been hung out, about the concluſion of the tenth century. Pope Silveſter II, then wrote a pathetic epiſtle, in name of the church of Jeruſalem, addreſſed to the church univerſal throughout the world, in which he exhorted all Chriſtian powers to unite in a noble confederacy, for ſuccouring their diſtreſſed brethren in Paleſtine, and for re-taking Jeruſalem, and delivering it from the Mahometan yoke. The ſcheme, however, at that time proved abortive. But though the plan of a holy war was for a while poſtponed, becauſe of the various troubles and commotions which

* The Coptic is the old Egyptian language mixed with the Greek, and wrote in Greek characters

† Euſeb. Renaudot. Diſſert. de liturgiarum Orient. origine et antiquitate, cap. vi. p. 40, 41

which agitated Europe, yet it was not entirely forgotten. Now it was revived in a more effectual manner. Now it was recommended with all the warmth of enthuſiaſm, as an heroic and glorious exploit worthy the Chriſtian name, to reſcue from the tyranny of the Saracens, and from Mahometan ſuperſtition, that ſacred city and that holy land, which had been conſecrated by the birth, the life, the blood, and reſurrection of a Saviour, and which had been for ſo long a time the theatre of a viſible miraculous providence. The loud and frequent complaints of the Aſiatic Chriſtians on account of the oppreſſions under which they groaned, and their repeated intreaties for aſſiſtance, touched the tender ſtrings of compaſſion. Motives of ſuperſtition and ſecurity were ſuperadded: For, according to the taſte of the times and the notions of religion which then prevailed, it was accounted an eminent part of piety to undertake pilgrimages, and to pay reſpect to the ſepulchres or ſhrines of departed ſaints. But moſt of all was it meritorious, to viſit the holy places of *Paleſtine*, ſo remarkably diſtinguiſhed by God, and Chriſt, by Prophets and Apoſtles. Yet this was extremely hazardous, when the whole country was under the deſpotic dominion of the implacable enemies of Chriſtianity.

Reaſons of policy and ambition influenced the Roman Pontifs to head and encourage ſuch a ſacred expedition. The European princes, when fairly embarked in it, were leſs at leiſure to obſtruct the progreſs of papal tyranny. In the abſence of many of them, the See of Rome could even with great facility promote its own deſigns of power and ſuperſtition; and additional wealth flowed into the Church by rich donations or legacies, from thoſe who enliſted themſelves as the ſoldiers

diers of Chriſt in this religious cauſe. It obtained the name of a *Croiſade* or *Cruſade*, as it was for the croſs of Chriſt that they fought, and as every one who ſerved in it, wore upon his right ſhoulder a conſecrated croſs, compoſed of various colours. This was accounted a badge of diſtinguiſhed dignity, and to which large immunities were annexed, particularly a total exemption from civil juriſdiction, upon paying a certain ſum of money. *

Gregory VII. the moſt intrepid and enterprizing Pontif that ever filled the Apoſtolic chair, determined to go in perſon, and head this religious expedition; an army of fifty thouſand men was actually muſtered under his command, and ready to follow their ſacred leader. But the violent conteſts in which he was involved with the emperor Henry IV. and other embaraſſing incidents at home, prevented him in the execution of his intended plan. *Peter* the famous Hermit, a native of *Amiens*, greatly contributed by his enthuſiaſtic zeal and indefatigable induſtry, to rouze into action the powers of Europe. He had made a progreſs through Paleſtine in the year 1093, and had with exquiſite anguiſh obſerved the dreadful diſtreſſes which Chriſtians there ſuffered, under the tyranny of the barbarous *Saracens*. Upon his return, he earneſtly intreated the interpoſition and aid both of the Roman and Grecian Pontifs, though without effect at that time. No way diſcouraged, he travelled through different kingdoms and countries, ſounding an alarm to war, and urging all to take up arms againſt the infidel nations. To make the deeper impreſſion upon the ſuperſtitious multitude, he ſhewed a letter whereſoever he went, which he ſaid was written in heaven, and from

* Puffendorf's Introd. to the Hiſt. of Europe, vol. II. p. 83.

from thence directed to all real Chriſtians, in order to animate them in this religious enterprize.

When matters were properly ripened, Urban II. conveened a very grand council at Placentia, *A. D.* 1095, where in the warmeſt manner he exhorted all, and preſſed an expedition into Paleſtine. This was the moſt numerous of any council that had ever been aſſembled, and was therefore held in the open fields. There were preſent in it two hundred prelates, four thouſand more of the ſacerdotal order, and no leſs than three hundred thouſand laymen. The majority of this illuſtrious aſſembly, did not however approve of the arduous project.

Another council was ſoon after this called at Clermont, where the Roman Pontif appeared in perſon. He made a florid pathetic ſpeech, in which he recommended the holy cauſe in the ſtrongeſt manner, and with deſired ſucceſs, ſo that vaſt numbers forthwith offered themſelves as volunteers in this religious war.

Hereupon, an immenſe army was gathered together, compoſed of all ranks and orders of men. Theſe made up a motely multitude, raw and undiſciplined, who were actuated by different motives, ſome from ſuperſtition, others from the proſpect of ſpoil and plunder, and many from a looſe and rambling turn. Grand preparations were, however, made for this unuſual warlike enterprize. At laſt, in the year 1096, a moſt numerous army of eight hundred thouſand men, the greateſt ever heard of in modern times, ſet forward for Conſtantinople, in ſeveral diſtinct bodies, and under the command of different Generals. From thence they propoſed to purſue their march into Aſia, and they expected to receive re-inforcement and ſupplies from Alexis Commenius the Grecian Emperor.

One

One grand diviſion was conducted by Peter the hermit, who ſtill retained the habit of an auſtere monk. Some of the moſt ſagacious commanders judged this a prudent meaſure, by which they got rid of an irregular unmanageable mob, not eaſy to be reduced to military diſcipline, and who might greatly embarraſs them in their warlike operations. Peter directed his courſe through Hungary and Thrace, where the troops under his command committed ſuch cruelties and outrages, as provoked the inhabitants to riſe in arms, and cut off a great number of them.

Thoſe diviſions which were led on by more expert and illuſtrious commanders, behaved with greater decency, and, with leſs diminution of numbers and reputation, arrived at Conſtantinople.

Godfrey of Boulogne, Duke of Lorrain, a moſt magnanimous hero, and his brother Baldwin, commanded a body of eighty thouſand men, conſiſting both of horſe and foot, a ſelect and intrepid band, and who marched through Germany and Hungary. Raimond, Earl of Tholouſe, conducted a ſeparate corps through the Sclavonian territories.

Robert Duke of Normandy, Robert Earl of Flanders, and Hugo, brother to Philip I. king of France, embarked their reſpective forces at different ports, and tranſported them to Dyrrachium. *Boemond*, Duke of Apulia and Calabria, ſoon followed, bringing with him a numerous and choſen body of courageous Normans.

This vaſt and formidable army was eſteemed equal to the moſt arduous undertaking, their progreſs was marked with terror and deſolation, and its approach made even the Grecian Emperor to tremble. Various conteſts and jealouſies aroſe between him and the illuſtrious leaders of the Cruſade.

ſade. But theſe were ſoon diſperſed by their departure, and the Emperor, with ſingular joy, beheld theſe mighty legions paſs through the ſtraits of *Gallipolis*, and proceed towards Bythinia.

Upon their arrival there, they laid ſiege to Nice, the capital city, of which they made themſelves maſters in the year 1097. From thence they carried their victorious arms into Syria, and reduced Antioch, which, with its rich and extenſive territory, was aſſigned to Boemond Duke of Apulia. Edeſſa was next ſubdued, which Baldwin, brother of Godfrey of Lorrain, took poſſeſſion of. After ſome defeats and ſome victories in the field, the ſiege of Jeruſalem was undertaken, which continued for five weeks. At laſt the happy conqueſt of this famous city was accompiſhed by the Chriſtian army, in the year 1099, * which crowned their ſanguine hopes.

All who were not Chriſtians were put to the ſword. Above ſeventy thouſand muſſelmen were maſſacred. The Jews were collected into one place, and burnt together. An immenſe ſpoil of ineſtimable value was found in the Mahometan moſques. Godfrey of Boulogne was ſaluted king of Jeruſalem by univerſal conſent. But when a crown reſplendent with gold and gems was brought him, he declined it with a grave and ſerious modeſty, and ſaid, That he could not bear the thought of wearing a crown of gold in that city, where the *Kings of kings* had been crowned with thorns.

However, he governed Jeruſalem with ſingular wiſdom and fortitude, ſupported his new dignity with ſignal honour and moderation, and reſerved a ſmall but gallant army for his ſecurity, whilſt he permitted the remaining troops to return home. He did not long enjoy his ſplendid acquiſition. About a year after the taking of Jeruſalem, this heroic

* It was taken by Storm on the 15th of July.

heroic Prince, diſtinguiſhed by many ſhining talents and virtues, was taken ill and died, leaving his dominions to his brother Baldwin, who aſſumed the title of King.

Nine kings reigned in a regular ſucceſſion, and the kingdom ſubſiſted eighty-eight years, till *A. D.* 1187, when the muſſelmen regained their former dominion. But after the ſpirit of cruſading had, like an epidemic madneſs, ſeized the European princes, it was a long time before it could be totally extinguiſhed. Freſh expeditions to Paleſtine were ſet on foot from time to time; repeated efforts were made by the Chriſtians; they ſtill had a nominal king of Jeruſalem; Richard I. king of England enjoyed this empty title, and in a particular manner diſtinguiſhed himſelf in a Cruſade to the Holy Land, in conjunction with the French King.

However, before the end of the thirteenth century, about the year 1298, all Chriſtian princes were entirely extirpated out of the Holy Land.

During theſe 200 years, it is almoſt incredible the vaſt number of Chriſtians who periſhed by ſword, famine, peſtilence and other calamities, in the proſecution of this religious warfare. According to the account of ſome hiſtorians, it is computed, that above two millions of people were deſtroyed in theſe romantic, ſuperſtitious expeditions *.

Much has been ſaid by different authors, for and againſt the lawfulneſs of theſe Cruſades, which we ſhall neither diſcuſs nor rehearſe; but it may be affirmed with ſafety, that, all circumſtances

* For the article of Cruſades, and for maſterly obſervations on that ſubject, I beg leave to refer the Reader to Dr Robertſon's learned and elegant Hiſtory of Charles V. vol. 1. p. 22, 238.

conſidered, they were really detrimental to the cauſe of true religion, and to the civil intereſts of Europe.

A ſtate of war in general is unfavourable for morals, and often proves a temptation to licentiouſneſs. The ſober and ſacred voice of piety and virtue, is too little regarded amidſt the hurries of a camp, the clangor of arms, the confuſions and cruelties of war. Theſe increaſe in proportion to the numbers of ſoldiery employed, and to the extent of military operations. Both theſe were remarkably multiplied in this religious war. The multitude of perſons engaged in it was prodigious. They were a confluence of all ranks and denominations of people from moſt of the weſtern kingdoms and countries: It was Europe riſing in arms againſt Aſia; Chriſtians againſt Mahometans; and the ſcenes of action were both diſtant and extenſive, at ſame time that the bloody conteſt was of very long duration.

Whilſt it continued, it ſerved to cheriſh the growth of ſuperſtition, from whence indeed it originally flowed. This had a ſucceſsful ſpread under the uncontrouled direction of the Roman Pontifs, who aſſumed a lead in all theſe ſacred exploits. At ſame time theſe greatly augmented the Papal power and tyranny, at the expence of thoſe who became dupes and tools in the hazardous enterprize. The dangers and uncertainties of it were ſo apparent, that thoſe who aſſumed the croſs, generally made their teſtaments before they ſet out, and often left large eſtates to the Church. *Thus* further enriched to a greater degree than ever,—the eccleſiaſtical orders, who ought to have been inſtructors and examples of religion to others, became more and more diſſolute. When the dignitaries of the Church, when whole companies of Biſhops

Biſhops and Abbots, aſſumed the military garb, and relinquiſhed their ſacerdotal charges, the inferior clergy, freed from all reſtraint, ran into every ſpecies of enormity, and religion was baniſhed and diſhonoured. The Latins, when they returned home from theſe Aſiatic campaigns, imported into Europe an immenſe quantity of pious or pretended relics, and a new fictitious croud of ſaints and tutelary patrons, a veneration for which proportionably abated the ſenſe of real and rational piety.

The Cruſades were likewiſe prejudicial to the civil intereſts of Europe.

The power and authority of the natural ſovereigns were much diminiſhed, by their abſence from their native dominions. Theſe became an eaſy prey to intriguing and ambitious neighbours. The Roman Pontifs, in particular, availed themſelves of this advantageous circumſtance, as was already hinted; nor could the policy or ſecurity of the European provinces be properly promoted, when a taſte for emigration and conqueſt was encouraged, and when their princes were removed at a vaſt diſtance, and engaged in fighting in another quarter of the globe. Beſides, their kingdoms were greatly depopulated by the frequent levies and numerous armies raiſed for Paleſtine. Incredible ſums of money were tranſmitted to Aſia for ſupporting the war; and many opulent, reſpectable families became extinct, or were involved in the deepeſt diſtreſs.

So prevalent and paſſionate was the turn for cruſading, that multitudes, in order to raiſe money to equip them for it, did rack their tenants and vaſſals to an exceſſive degree, who thereby were often obliged to accompany their oppreſſors from abſolute poverty. Robert, Duke of Normandy, mortgaged his duchy to his brother William the Con-

quer

queror, then King of England, that he might be enabled to defray the expences of his ſacred expedition. Odo, Viſcount of Bourges, ſold his territory to the French King. Many of the moſt illuſtrious families imitated the example, and ſold or mortgaged their lands for the ſame purpoſe *.

Thus a very great number of ancient eſtates which belonged to the European nobility, were transferred to Kings and Princes, ſometimes to Prieſts and Monks, and even to perſons of obſcure ſtation, who were able to advance ready caſh. This produced a ſtrange and ſudden tranſition of property, occaſioned general diſorder and confuſion, and frequently terminated in conſequences full of diſcord and calamity.

The conteſt that had formerly ſubſiſted concerning Inveſtitures, ſtill continued in the *twelfth* century, and was productive of freſh diſturbances both in Church and State.

The right of electing Biſhops and Abbots originally belonged to the Clergy. But when the European Princes advanced the ſacerdotal order to civil dignity and juriſdiction, when with royal munificence they made grants to them of extenſive territories, and of ſtrong caſtles, theſe were conſidered as fiefs aſſigned, for which the poſſeſſors were obliged to do homage, and to ſwear allegiance to the ſovereign who conferred them. Accordingly, they uſed to repair to court, and to receive a transfer or inveſtiture of ſuch property and privilege as Laymen did, by a certain ſymbol of a wand or ſcepter, to which were added a ring and paſtoral ſtaff, or croſier.

Not

* Jo. Geo. Cramer, de juribus et prerogativis nobilitatis, tom. I. p. 81, 83.

Not contented with this, the Emperors and Kings thought proper to aſſume to themſelves the excluſive power of promoting to biſhoprics and abbeys ſuch as they pleaſed, and at laſt of ſelling the dignities of the Church to the higheſt bidder.

The Clergy, and particularly the Roman Pontifs, conſidered this cuſtom, not only as a religious profanation, but as a manifeſt invaſion of their peculiar privilege. In order, therefore, to prevent or elude the ſame, they deviſed this ſtratagem, which indeed for ſome time proved effectual. Whenever a Biſhop or Abbot died, they immediately ſupplied the vacancy by one of their own nomination, whom they conſecrated and inſtalled without delay. The ſacred ſolemnity of a conſecration fixed the matter beyond all revocation. Hereupon the Emperors and Princes ordered, that, upon the deceaſe of Biſhops, their ring and croſier ſhould be forthwith tranſmitted to the Sovereign, within whoſe dominion the dioceſe lay. This mandate the civil magiſtrate carefully executed; and the Prince, poſſeſſed of the badges and enſigns of Epiſcopal dignity, conferred them upon his own favourites. Thus the Clergy, in their turn, found themſelves obliged to confirm ſuch election, which could not with any propriety be evaded. But the Roman Pontifs were too haughty and jealous to ſubmit to ſuch uſurpation. They looked upon this as a total deviation from the original practice and privilege of the Church, as an encroachment upon eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction, and as a flagrant inſtance of *Eraſtian* preſumption, by interfering with the proper duties and rights of the ſacerdotal function. The ring and croſier were the venerable enſigns of ſpiritual power and dignity, which were polluted, as they thought, by paſſing through the hands of unconſecrated Laymen. It was therefore inſiſted on by the

the Clergy, that thoſe emblems of paſtoral authority ſhould be always depoſited with them, who had the ſole right of conferring and exerciſing it.

Paſcal II. an arrogant Pontif, fomented the diſputes concerning inveſtitures, aſſembled a council at Rome *A. D.* 1102, and there renewed all the decrees and anathemas formerly thundered out againſt Henry IV. Not ſatisfied with this, he inſtigated his own ſon to rebel againſt him, who forced his father, in a moſt unnatural manner, to abdicate the empire, and who thereupon ſeized on the government by the name of Henry V. But this revolution by no means anſwered the intriguing views of the ambitious Pope. The new Emperor would not be perſuaded to diveſt himſelf of the right of inveſtiture. This diſappointment exaſperated Paſcal to a high degree, and engaged him in harſh and reſentful meaſures againſt Henry. The Emperor reſolved, if poſſible, to put a period to a conteſt which had ſo long ſubſiſted, marched with a formidable army into Italy *A. D.* 1110, and advanced towards Rome.

The Pontif was no wiſe prepared to make head againſt him, and therefore propoſed to him conditions of peace. Theſe were, that the Biſhops and Abbots on the one hand, ſhould reſign to the Emperor all thoſe rights and privileges which properly belonged to royalty, ſuch as holding allodial lands, and independent juriſdiction in civil matters, levying or coining of money; whilſt he, on the other hand, was to denude himſelf of the privilege of inveſting with the ring and croſier.

Theſe articles were readily agreed to by Henry; but the Italian and German Prelates were highly incenſed, and a dreadful tumult thereupon enſued. The Emperor did then, without any ceremony, confine the Pontif a priſoner in the caſtle of *Viterbo*.

In

In this unfortunate ſituation, he was prevailed on to agree that the Emperor ſhould confer the enſigns of the Epiſcopal office.

This treaty of peace was of a tranſitory nature, and was productive of very violent contention, and of more bloody wars. A general outcry was raiſed againſt the Pontif as a traitor againſt the Church, and as one who had proſtituted the dignity of his ſacred character, betrayed his truſt, and diſgraced religion.

Paſcal, aſhamed of the part he had acted, aſſembled a council in the church of Lateran, where, with great humility, he confeſſed his error, and left the articles of the late convention to their determination, who thereupon thought proper to condemn and annul them. The Emperor himſelf was excommunicated in ſeveral councils, which met both in France and Germany; and to compleat his misfortunes, ſeveral German Princes revolted from him, and took up arms in defence of the Church. Henry, however, raiſed a numerous army, and marched againſt Rome, whilſt Paſcal endeavoured to form alliances, to engage ſuccours, and to prepare for a bloody war.

At this important criſis the Pontif died.

But his ſucceſſors, particularly Callixtus II. carried on the ſame ſcheme of oppoſition, and warmly eſpouſed the intereſts of the Church, for which he not only argued but fought. At laſt he diſcovered pacific diſpoſitions, and was willing to make ſome conceſſions, in order to reſtore public tranquillity.

Accordingly, a peace was concluded at a general diet held at *Worms*, *A. D.* 1122, where it was agreed, that for the future Biſhops and Abbots ſhould be elected by thoſe who were intitled, but in preſence of the Emperor or his Deputy; that thoſe who are elected ſhall take an oath of allegi-

ance

ance to the Emperor; and that he ſhould no longer confer the *Regalia* by the ring and croſier, which properly appertain to the Church, but only by the *ſceptre*, as an enſign of civil authority and juriſdiction.

Thus ended the violent conteſt about the right of inveſtitures, that had continued for about 56 years, which had ſo much embroiled the nations and deſolated the countries of Europe. The treaty of peace was publiſhed in the Emperor's camp, the excommunication that ſtood againſt him was taken off, and the Pontif aſſembled what is called the firſt or general *Lateran* council, which approved all that had been tranſacted. It was held at Rome in March 1123, and conſiſted of 300 Prelates according to *Sugarr*, but of 426 according to the Abbot of *Urſperge*. This numerous aſſembly did likewiſe enact and publiſh a great many canons or eccleſiaſtical laws relative to other matters, particularly againſt Simony, againſt the marriage of the Clergy, diſſolving all nuptial connections amongſt them; alſo with reſpect to the revenues of the Church, and granting a plenary remiſſion of ſins to all who ſhould enliſt themſelves for the Cruſade.

In the year 1130, a violent diviſion aroſe in the college of Cardinals concerning the election of a Pope, which was like to have produced a ſchiſm in the Church of Rome. This was carried to ſuch a height, that two were actually raiſed at one time to the Pontificate, namely, Honorius II. and Innocent II. The firſt dying *A. D.* 1138, left the other in the entire poſſeſſion of the Papal chair. His ſucceſſors were involved in various dangers and troubles. Eugenius III. found himſelf in ſo perilous a ſituation, that he was often obliged to fly from Rome, and for a conſiderable time he reſided in France. Under him, about the year 1150, Rome

Rome was in great agitation. There was then a ſcheme formed by a powerful party there, to reduce within a narrow compaſs the Papal power, juriſdiction and opulence, to reſtrict the Church to ſuch tithes and emoluments as the Primitive Paſtors enjoyed, and to confine its government to ſpiritual matters *. It was farther projected, to reſtore the Roman Senate to its ancient honours and privileges, its priſtine ſplendor and glory, and to emancipate the city of Rome in particular, from all civil ſubjection to the Apoſtolic chair.

Had this grand plan been executed, and had ſome ſkilful hands been employed to ſupport it for a few years, it muſt have been followed with a general revolution, which would very much have altered the face of affairs in Europe, and would probably have anticipated the reformation in religion.

Frederic I. ſurnamed Barbaroſſa, appears to have been determined to maintain the dignity of the Empire, and to clip the wings of Papal ambition. Adrian IV. no way diſmayed, was extremely active and vigorous in concerting meaſures for his own defence. Nay, ſuch was his arrogance, that at the coronation of the Emperor at Rome, *A. D.* 1155, he deſired Frederic to officiate as his equerry, and to hold the ſtirrup whilſt the lordly Pontif mounted on horſeback. Such an imperious propoſal was treated with juſt diſdain, and other incidents of a more intereſting and public nature, begot mutual animoſity and miſunderſtanding. The Emperor paſſed a law with a view to check the growing opulence of the Clergy, prohibiting the transfer of fiefs to the Church, without the knowledge and approbation of the ſovereign or ſuperior, whilſt he employed his arms in ſubjecting to his dominion

* Dr Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. II. p. 394.

ſome ſmall principalities and petty Republics in Italy.

An open war was dreaded as what would follow from ſuch vigorous proceedings, but the ſtorm was diſperſed by the death of *Adrian*.

In mean time, Frederic obtained in the council of Clarendon, which was aſſembled *A. D.* 1164, deciſions of material conſequence, defining in more explicit terms the juriſdiction of the Sovereign over the ſacerdotal order, and limiting their eccleſiaſtical authority within a narrow compaſs. Becket, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, would not conform to theſe conſtitutions, which, in his opinion, were prejudicial to the Church, and derogatory from the majeſty of the Roman Pontifs. This obſtinacy drew upon him the diſpleaſure of his king, Henry II. of England, ſo that he was obliged to retire into France. By the friendly mediation of Pope Alexander III. and the French Monarch, the primate was reſtored to his country and dignity. Still, however, he perſiſted in meaſures contradictory to the court, and created much diſturbance, which at laſt proved fatal to him. For ſoon afterwards, he was aſſaſſinated by four perſons before the altar of his own cathedral, whilſt engaged at Veſpers. Some ſuſpect the King as acceſſary in ſome degree to this murder. And ſo it was, that the Roman Pontif ſubjected him to ſevere penance, but canonized his zealous Prelate, inrolling him among the ſaintly order in the year 1173.

Alexander III. was very intent on promoting the Papal power, and counteracting any deſigns formed for its abridgement. Accordingly he conveened the third council of the Lateran, *A. D.* 1179, where he got ſeveral decrees paſſed that were favourable to his ambitious views. Among others, it was enacted, that for the future, the Popes of Rome ſhould be

be elected by the college of Cardinals alone, two-thirds of whoſe votes ſhould be always deciſive. And this law ſtill remains in force, by which the Roman nobility, clergy, and people, are ſolemnly excluded.

A ſpiritual war, eccleſiaſtical proſecution and excommunication, were declared againſt Heretics, whoſe numbers now increaſed, and who occaſioned many diſſentions and tumults by their zeal in propagating their opinions. The right of canonization was taken from the Councils and Biſhops, and veſted as a high and important matter in the hands of the Roman Pontif alone.

Not ſatisfied with all this, Alexander actually exerciſed the prerogative which had been claimed by the Pontifs from the time of Gregory VII. of erecting new kingdoms; and accordingly he conferred the title and dignity of King, with all the enſigns and emblems of royalty, upon Alphonſo I. Duke of Portugal, who, as an obedient ſon of the Church, had ſome time before made his province tributary to the See of Rome.

Various attempts were made during the courſe of this century, to propagate the light of the goſpel, eſpecially among the northern provinces of Europe, many of which lay yet involved in Pagan darkneſs.

Boleſlaus, Duke of Poland, having ſubdued the *Pomeranians*, made offers of peace to them, on condition of their embracing Chriſtianity. This was agreed to; and Otho, Biſhop of Bamberg, a man of remarkable ſanctity and zeal, reſided for ſome time amongſt them, in order to inſtruct them in the principles of the goſpel.

Waldemar I. King of Denmark, fought many famous battles againſt the heathen nations, particularly the Sclavonians, Venedi and Vandals, Wherever

ever he obtained the victory, he pulled down the Pagan temples and images, deſtroyed their ſacred groves, and erected the Chriſtian worſhip in their place. The iſland of Rugen, near Pomerania, was likewiſe conquered by this illuſtrious Prince in the year 1168, and by his means prevailed on to receive the goſpel.

The Finlanders were not only defeated in many bloody battles by Eric IX. King of Sweden, and brought under his dominion, but were obliged to become Chriſtians.

The Roman Pontif, Urban III. declared a holy war againſt the Livonians, a fierce and ſavage people. He ſent ſeveral Biſhops at once to ſubdue and convert them. And theſe holy fathers thereupon aſſumed a military character, marched into Livonia at the head of powerful armies, and preached the goſpel ſword in hand. They dragooned the inhabitants into a profeſſion of Chriſtianity; freſh troops were detached from Germany to ſecond the efforts of the booted Apoſtles, who committed the greateſt cruelties; and the miſerable people worn out by continued calamity, were compelled to renounce their falſe deities, whilſt the images of ſaints and martyrs were ſubſtituted in their room: And as if they had been to pay for the bleſſings of the goſpel, the Biſhops and Commanders ſeized on their lands and territories, and divided the ſpoil.

Henry, Duke of Saxony, ſurnamed the Lion, endeavoured to convert the *Sclavonians*, who inhabited the coaſt of the Baltic ſea. But he purſued mild and honourable meaſures, much more becoming a man and a Chriſtian, and which ſerve to immortalize his name to poſterity. Among other rational and prudent ſchemes for promoting his pious deſign, he erected and endowed three biſhoprics which theſe barbarians had deſtroyed, and

ſent

ſent grave and learned doctors to inſtruct the people.

Vicelinus, Biſhop of Oldenbourg, reſided amongſt them for 30 years, who, by the piety of his example, and the aſſiduity of his care and diligence, gained mightily even upon that rough and intractable nation.

Conſidering the genuine excellence and ſublimity of the goſpel, one cannot but lament the methods by which it was ſometimes promoted in theſe later ages, ſo contrary both to the nature of man, and the genius of religion. Beſides, the Romiſh miſſionaries gave an imperfect and unamiable view of Chriſtianity, and intermixed with it many inventions of their own, whilſt at ſame time they were too indulgent to the rites and ceremonies of Pagan ſuperſtition. And many of theſe heralds, and propagators of the faith, ſeem to have been more actuated by perſonal ambition, or a zeal for the grandeur and authority of the Roman Pontifs, than by principles of real religion and benevolence. No wonder then if the converſions they effected, were extremely defective at firſt, and if powerful prejudices remained in the breaſts of many who became nominal Chriſtians.

The cauſe of Chriſtianity gained conſiderable ground in Aſiatic Tartary, by a remarkable revolution that happened there. This was brought about by John a Preſbyter, called *Preſter John*. He was a *Neſtorian* prieſt, a man of vaſt ambition, formed for enterprize, and diſtinguiſhed by eminent talents. Upon the death of *Kenchan*, who reigned in the eaſtern part of Aſia, the famous Preſter John invaded his kingdom with ſurpriſing magnanimity, and proved ſucceſsful. From a humble prieſt, he aſcended to a kingly throne; and for a long time ſwayed a ſcepter over an opulent and powerful nation,

nation, who ſubmitted to his victorious arms. He enlightened his dominions with the knowledge of the goſpel, and left them to his ſon and ſucceſſor David. But he was deprived of them towards the concluſion of this century, by *Genghiz-Kan* Emperor of the Tartars, a renowned and ſucceſsful warrior.

The new kingdom of Paleſtine, erected by the European Chriſtians in the preceding century, continued in a flouriſhing ſituation for a conſiderable time. But when the Mahometans obſerved, that very great numbers of their formidable conquerors returned home to their own countries, when they conſidered the diviſions and animoſities that reigned among the Chriſtian Chiefs that remained, they reſumed their courage, and endeavoured to recover what they had formerly loſt. The Chriſtians exerted themſelves with extraordinary vigilance and valour, and ſuſtained the ſhock for many years. But when the city of Edeſſa fell a ſacrifice, when Antioch was expoſed to the ſame fate, and when their affairs in general began to decline, their ſpirits drooped, and they then caſt a wiſhful eye to their brethren in Europe, and in the moſt earneſt manner implored aſſiſtance from thence. This however was not at firſt very readily granted. But *Bernard*, the famous Abbot of *Clairval*, a perſon of ardent zeal and eminent influence, ſtood their firm and reſolute friend, warmly eſpouſed their cauſe, and preached up the Cruſade both in France and Germany with ſurprizing ſucceſs.

A grand Parliament was aſſembled at Vezelai, *A. D.* 1146, where were preſent Lewis VII. King of France, his Queen, and a vaſt number of the nobility. There Bernard diſplayed all the force and charms of his eloquence; there he extolled and enforced the Cruſade with ſuch a torrent of perſuaſion,

perſuaſion, and with ſuch confidence of ſucceſs, that the King, Queen, and all the nobles immediately aſſumed the enſign of the Croſs, and prepared for a holy campaign.

Conrad III. Emperor of Germany, was likewiſe prevailed on to imitate the example of the French King. Theſe two monarchs, at the head of their reſpective armies marched for Paleſtine, though by a different rout. After meeting with a multitude of diſaſters and loſſes, they arrived at Jeruſalem in the year 1148, but did not obtain thoſe advantages that were expected, which made them return to Europe the year following.

Saladin, Sultan of Egypt and Syria, waged war againſt the Chriſtians of Paleſtine, and in a bloody battle fought near *Tiberias A. D.* 1187, took Guy of Luſignan, King of Jeruſalem, priſoner, and made himſelf maſter of the holy city. The carnage, cruelty, and deſolations, that attended this campaign, were ready to cruſh and diſpirit the Chriſtians. But they again ſollicited freſh ſuccours from Europe, and thereupon a third Cruſade was ſet on foot, which proved more ſucceſsful.

Frederic I. Emperor of Germany, ſet himſelf at the head of this grand expedition *A. D.* 1189. He marched with a numerous army into the Leſſer Aſia, defeated the Sultan of Iconium, and afterwards penetrated into Syria. High expectations were raiſed from his military proweſs and ſucceſs, when he unfortunately periſhed in paſſing the river Saleph near Seleucia.

Philip Auguſtus the French monarch, and the lion-hearted Richard, King of England, whom we formerly mentioned, ſet out for the Holy Land at the head of their reſpective troops *A. D.* 1190. They arrived there the following year, and obtained ſeveral victories over the Infidels. The French King ſoon returned home, leaving a great part of his

his army behind him. But Richard puſhed the war with vigour, gave ſignal proofs of heroic intrepidity, made himſelf maſter of Cæſarea, and gained ſeveral victories over Saladin. At laſt he concluded with him a truce for ſeveral years, and returned home with his victorious army *A. D.* 1193.

The Cruſades gave riſe to three grand military orders, whoſe office it was to protect the Pilgrims travelling to and from Paleſtine, to aſſiſt the poor and ſick among them, to clear the public roads of robbers, and to make continual war upon Muſſulmen. The firſt order was that of the Knights of St John of Jeruſalem, and who were ſometimes called Hoſpitallers, from a famous hoſpital in that city dedicated to John the Baptiſt. There the diſtreſſed Pilgrims were relieved and taken care of by the charitable Knights, who, in proceſs of time, became immenſely rich from the liberality of Chriſtian Princes, and from large donations made them by wealthy Pilgrims. They roſe to ſuch a pitch of power and opulence, that *Raymond du Puy*, the Governor of this illuſtrious order and hoſpital, offered to the King of Jeruſalem to make war upon the Mahometans at their own expence, which propoſal was accepted of, and the Roman Pontif gave ſanction to the enterprize.

When the Chriſtian powers were at laſt driven from Paleſtine, theſe famous Knights retired into Cyprus. Afterwards they made themſelves maſters of Rhodes, but upon their expulſion from thence by the Turks, they obtained from the Emperor Charles V. a ſolemn grant of the iſland of Malta, where the Grand Knight reſides to this day.

The Knights Templars conſtitute another order, whoſe proper profeſſion was that of arms alone.

Baldwin

Baldwin II, gave them a very noble palace near the Temple of Jeruſalem, from whence they were called Templars, and from whom, as well as many others, they derived great wealth and authority. They performed many great exploits, and acquired high renown in war. But their proſperity and affluence proved their ruin. They ran into all manner of licentiouſneſs, and ſtained their character, as alſo the luſtre of the Chriſtian name to ſuch a degree, that their order was totally ſuppreſſed by the Pope and council in the fourteenth century.

The third order was diſtinguiſhed by the title of Teutonic Knights of St Mary of Jeruſalem. It was inſtituted about the year 1190, for the ſupport of the Chriſtian cauſe, the defence of the Holy Land, and to aid and refreſh pious pilgrims, ſo that both war and charity were the objects of this fraternity. None were admitted into it but Germans, and theſe too of illuſtrious extraction. For a long while they affected great auſterity and œconomy, as if ſolely ſollicitous about the welfare of others, whilſt unconcerned about their own. In proceſs of time, the Teutonic Knights increaſed vaſtly in number, power, and wealth. They then degenerated into a more luxurious courſe, became ambitious of conqueſt, and when they relinquiſhed Paleſtine, acquired by the valour of their arms, large poſſeſſions in *Pruſſia*, *Courland*, and *Livonia*. But ſoon after the Reformation, they were deprived of a conſiderable part of theſe, though a great many *Teutonic croſſes* ſtill remain in Germany, and inherit very large eſtates *.

* Although many calamities and revolutions diſtracted the Grecian empire, and though the weſtern was deeply embroiled in wars and conteſts, yet conſiderable attention was paid in this century

* Helyot, Hiſt. des ordres, tom. 3. p. 140.

to the cultivation of letters. Learning and philoſophy found a ſanctuary both among the Greeks and Latins, owing to the liberality of Emperors and to the taſte and refinement of ſome of the Grecian and Roman Pontifs, particularly, Michael Anchialus, Patriarch of Conſtantinople, and Alexander III. Hence it was, that ſchools and academies were eſtabliſhed in many of the principal cities of Europe, which in the ſucceeding age were erected into univerſities. Theſe were afterwards ſtill more richly endowed, whilſt they improved upon the former plans of education, and in all the various branches of ſcience.

A very unexpected event reſtored the knowledge and reputation of the ancient Roman law, which had gone into neglect and deſuetude for ages paſt. The original manuſcript of the famous Pandect of Juſtinian, was fortunately found in the ruins of Amalphi, when that city was taken by Lotharius II, *A. D.* 1137. The Emperor made a preſent of it to the people of Piſa, who had greatly contributed to the ſucceſs of the ſiege. The valuable collection now diſcovered, diffuſed much juſter notions of juriſprudence and legiſlation, than what had been hitherto received; its principles and maxims were univerſally admired, particular colleges were erected for the ſtudy of the Roman law, which ſoon multiplied over Europe, and a ſurprizing revolution aroſe in the courts of juſtice, and with reſpect to the courſe of judicial proceſs. Not only were different nations hitherto governed by diſtinct ſyſtems of law, but the ſeveral courts in the ſame country did adopt a body of laws peculiar to themſelves. But the Roman law ſoon acquired ſuch authority, as to ſupplant the moſt reſpectable inſtitutions, even the Salic, Lombard, and

and Burgundian Codes, and generally prevailed in moſt of the European nations.

When the civil law came to be conſidered as a branch of academical learning, the Roman Pontifs were deſirous of obtaining the ſame privilege for the Canon law. This however it was not eaſy to accompliſh. For the laws of the Church were ſo various, ſo irregular and indigeſted, and the collections hitherto made of them were ſo voluminous and inconſiſtent, that there was no methodical connected ſyſtem, on which a plan of eccleſiaſtical polity could properly be founded. Hereupon, *Gratian*, a benedictine monk, a man of learning and induſtry, did compoſe and publiſh an epitome of Canon law, which he intitled,—A Reunion or Coalition of jarring Canons. This was intended in a particular manner for the uſe of ſchools and colleges; and accordingly moſt maſters adopted it as the text, from which they uſed to prelect to the ſtudents. Some of the Romiſh communion have laviſhed many encomiums upon this abridgement of Gratian, whilſt others acknowledge that it labours under many miſtakes and defects. But notwithſtanding this, it ſtill maintains its ground, and conſiderable attention continues to be paid to it, in matters of an eccleſiaſtical nature.

Notwithſtanding the prodigious number of convents which already abounded every where, and the licentiouſneſs into which many of them ran headlong, ſo as to diſgrace their religion and profeſſion, yet we find many new monaſteries founded for both ſexes during the courſe of this century. We cannot but make particular mention of one that was eſtabliſhed by Norbert, a German nobleman, and Archbiſhop of Magdeburg, about the year 1121. It was known by the name of the "Order of Premontré in Picardy." It ſpread through

through moſt of the provinces in Europe with an aſtoniſhing rapidity, and from the moſt contemptible poverty at its firſt outſet, roſe to enormous opulence. They received ſo many donations from the liberal and ſuperſtitious, that in the ſpace of thirty years from the time of their foundation, they could boaſt of one hundred abbies in France and Germany. In courſe of time, the order multiplied to ſuch a wonderful degree, that they had monaſteries throughout all chriſtendom, amounting to 1000 abbies, 300 provoſtſhips, 500 nunneries, and an incredible number of priories, though all theſe are now greatly diminiſhed.

Indeed the eſtabliſhing of monaſtic ſocieties, or becoming members of them, was then conſidered as a glorious atchievement in religion, and as a ſufficient atonement for all kind of crimes. Ignorance and wild ſuperſtition, or the moſt fanatical enthuſiaſm reigned to an extreme degree, whilſt genuine Chriſtianity was little underſtood. The *Scholaſtic* doctors gloried in the axioms and deciſions of the ancient Dialecticians however intricate and metaphyſical, or in the ſophiſtry of falſe philoſophy; while on the other hand, the Myſtics made pretenſions to a divine impulſe, boaſted of viſions and celeſtial connections above the rank of humanity, and diſcarded the exerciſe of reaſon in matters of faith.

The adoration of the Virgin Mary, a vaſt veneration for departed ſaints, for images and relics, and outward ceremonies, uſurped the place of that rational and devout worſhip, which was due to God, and the Saviour of the world. The Prieſts and Monks inſtead of checking, cheriſhed theſe miſtaken notions and dangerous errors, yea, with ſingular dexterity diverted them into their own great emolument. The Biſhops impoſed upon the credulity

credulity and ſuperſtition of the multitude, and inſtilled into them high notions of Epiſcopal power and authority. In order to raiſe money for the purpoſes of pleaſure or grandeur, or for erecting magnificent churches, or for carrying on their ſchemes of ambition, they fleeced their flock by the moſt artful inſinuations, particularly by exacting a certain ſum for remitting penalties incurred by tranſgreſſors. This was granting indulgences, which proved a moſt fruitful ſource of opulence to the church of Rome. Thus they weighed iniquity in ſcales, and every ſpecies of ſin had its proper puniſhment, at ſame time its ſtated price. The Abbots and Monks who were not qualified for ſuch diſpenſations, carried about in pompous proceſſion the carcaſes or relics of Saints and Martyrs, and allowed the gazing, giddy mob to touch or embrace them at the fixed rates which avarice demanded.

When the Roman Pontifs beheld the inferior clergy amaſſing vaſt treaſures by the ſale of indulgences, they at firſt limited the Biſhops within certain reſtrictions, and afterwards aſſumed this gainful traffick to themſelves. The Court of Rome became the only magazine, from whence were iſſued out indulgences, granting a partial or plenary remiſſion of the temporal penalties, or eccleſiaſtical penances, which were annexed in the *Penitential* to each kind of crime. Nay, they took a bolder ſtep, and with groſs impiety pretended to remove or modify the puniſhments of a future ſtate, when they were handſomely paid for it *.

To ſupport and palliate ſuch a ſcandalous practice, the Pontifs ſtarted a new doctrine, aſſerting that a rich Bank of Merit was lodged in their hands. This,

* Morinus, De adminiſtratione Sacramenti Penitentiæ, lib. 10.

This, they ſaid, conſiſted of the pious and virtuous deeds, which ſaints had performed, beyond what was neceſſary for their own ſalvation, and which they had the privilege of diſpenſing as they ſaw meet, and of applying for the benefit of ſinners, ſo as to deliver them from all puniſhment. This tenet, abſurd as it is, gained ground, anſwered the ends for which it was deviſed, and is ſtill maintained and juſtified, to the indelible reproach of the Church of Rome.

The ſhameful and daily increaſe of indulgences, the vices of the Clergy, the luxury and arrogance of Pontifs and Biſhops, the prevalence of ſuperſtition, and the enormous growth of rites and ceremonies, gave great offence to many pious perſons. They perceived how inconſiſtent theſe things were with the ſacred Scriptures, imperfect as their knowledge of theſe were, and how contrary to the pure and divine religion of Jeſus. They wiſhed and prayed for a reformation, but they themſelves were unequal to the arduous enterprize. They were even tinctured with the prejudices of the times, their zeal was not always tempered with prudence; running precipitately from the abuſes of ſuperſtition, and finding evident reaſon for condemning it, they ſometimes degenerated into enthuſiaſm, carried their notions of auſterity and reformation to an extravagant length, and thus gave riſe to opinions, and engendered ſects, which were not always moſt honourable to Chriſtianity. Yet theſe feeble efforts were laudable and uſeful on many occaſions; they in ſome degree preſerved a juſter ſenſe of religion than what generally prevailed, and maintained a kind of oppoſition to the uſurpations of Popery.

The Waldenſes, however, deſerve to be mentioned with particular reſpect. They paſs under different

different denominations, and their origin has been variouſly repreſented. They call themſelves Vallenſes, becauſe they reſide as in a valley of tears, in the valleys of Piedmont. They are ſometimes denominated Albigenſes, from Alby a city in the ſouthern part of France, where great numbers of them lived. From Lyons they obtained the name of Leoniſts, and from the purity of their life and doctrine, that of Cathari, as the name of Puritans was afterwards given to ſome who profeſſed the ſame principles. Some are of opinion that the Valdenſes or Vaudois exiſted in the ſeventh century, and that many who then groaned under and oppoſed the doctrines and uſurpations of the Church of Rome, retreated into the peaceful vales of Piedmont, where they might be free from oppreſſion and tyranny, and ſecurely enjoy their religion and conſcience *. Other hiſtorians conſider Peter Waldus as the proper founder of this ſect. He was an opulent merchant at Waldum a city of Lyons, a man of eminent piety, and of ardent zeal. About the year 1160, he employed *Stephanus de Eviſa* a Prieſt, to tranſlate from Latin into French the four Goſpels, and ſeveral other books of Scripture. He ſoon perceived, how widely different theſe were from the doctrines and uſages of the Church of Rome. Animated with a noble deſire to diſpel the darkneſs of ſuperſtition, and to diffuſe the light of Divine truth, he relinguiſhed his mercantile profeſſion, diſtributed his eſtate among the poor, and commenced a preacher of the Goſpel, in the year 1180. A multitude of well diſpoſed perſons entered into his views, adopted his religious ſentiments, and formed a very conſiderable ſociety. The ghoſtly rulers of the Church ſoon became jealous

* Vid. Dr. Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. II. p. 452.

jealous of ſuch a formidable antagoniſt, and endeavoured to undermine his credit, and oppoſe his progreſs. Their attempt however, proved ineffectual. His diſciples multiplied apace, and ſuch was the purity of their doctrine, the ſimplicity of their worſhip, and the innocence and ſanctity of their behaviour, that they charmed all who beheld them with attention. Vaſt numbers were engaged to aſſociate with them, and their reputation and influence daily increaſed. They formed themſelves into religious aſſemblies, and eſtabliſhed many of them in France and Lombardy. In a ſhort time, they ſpread with an aſtoniſhing rapidity through many provinces of Europe, roſe to great credit, power, and importance, ſo that in the ſucceeding century a dreadful war was waged againſt them by the Roman Pontifs, the ſhocks of which they ſuſtained with invincible fortitude.

They fought upon principle, and for what they clearly apprehended to be the truth of God. Their fundamental doctrine was, that the authority of Scripture was ſupreme, that this was the ſole rule for judging in matters of Religion, and that whatever diſagreed therewith was to be rejected.

They declared that the decrees of councils were only to be ſo far approved as they might agree with the word of God. They aſſerted that the reading and knowledge of Scripture was neceſſary for all, and the privilege of the Laity as well as of the Clergy. They only acknowledged as Sacraments, Baptiſm, and the Lord's Supper, and affirmed that both Prieſts and people ought to receive the laſt in both kinds. They condemned Tranſubſtantiation, Maſſes, and Prayers for the dead, and the doctrine of Purgatory. They declared that the invocation and worſhip of departed ſaints was idolatry; that the Church of Rome was Antichriſt,

Antichriſt, and the Whore of Babylon; that the Pope and Biſhops were the wolves of the Church of Chriſt, and were not to be obeyed; that the Pope had no primacy over the Churches, nor any title to the temporal ſword. They maintained, that the true Church of Chriſt was that which heareth the ſincere word of God, and obſerveth only the ſacraments therein inſtituted. They condemned the celibacy of the Clergy, the monaſtic orders, the ſuperſtitious dedications of churches, pilgrimages, ſo many ſuperfluous feſtivals, and thoſe endleſs, vain rites and ceremonies, of which there was no mention in the Goſpel.

Their own rules of practice were extremely rigid and auſtere, and their aim and intention was to reduce every thing in religion to the ſtandard and diſcipline of the primitive Church.

There were indeed ſome diſtinctions among them, and thoſe who lived in Italy were different in ſome opinions from their brethren in France and in other European kingdoms; but in general, they held almoſt the ſame opinions as thoſe who are now called Reformers and Calviniſts *.

The religious principles which they eſpouſed, were directly oppoſite to Popery; and their zeal and numbers ſeemed to menace a Revolution fatal to the Church of Rome. The Roman Pontifs took the alarm, publiſhed a kind of Cruſade againſt them, and during the courſe of the thirteenth century carried on a moſt cruel perſecution againſt all whom they branded with the name of Heretics.

* Mezeray, the Hiſtoriographer of France, ſays,—Avoint à peu prés les meſmés opinions que ceux qu' on nomme aujord'huy Calviniſtes. —Abregé Chronol. Philippe Auguſte, p. 657.——Thuanus gives much the ſame character of the Waldenſes. Thuan. Hiſt. lib. 6. ſect. 16.

This did not however diſmay or diſpirit them. They multiplied in Italy, Spain, France, and Germany, and in a particular manner in Narbonne Gaul, where they met with powerful protection from Raymond VI. Earl of Tholouſe, and ſeveral other perſonages of the firſt diſtinction. Innocent the III. obſerving with regret that the Biſhops in thoſe parts were too inclinable to ſhew lenity and forbearance, detached legates extraordinary, with ample powers, to extirpate what was then deemed hereſy, and to take the moſt ſpeedy and effectual methods for ſecuring obedience to the Church. Theſe ſpiritual champions executed their commiſſion with barbarous fidelity, ſummoned before them all ſuſpected perſons, and inflicted capital puniſhment on ſuch they thought guilty, and who could not be convinced by their arguments. The members of this new tribunal were diſtinguiſhed in ordinary diſcourſe by the appellation of Inquiſitors, and from them the formidable Court of Inquiſition derives its original.

This odious Judicature was ſoon erected in many provinces, and in moſt cities where it was known that any number of heretics reſided. The Dominican Friars were ſingled out as proper perſons to be promoted to a ſeat here, and who indeed exerted themſelves with a lawleſs fury, in the diſcharge of their unchriſtian office. At firſt, however, in order to ſave appearances, and prevent too violent apprehenſions, they proceeded againſt ſchiſmatics only, and with ſome decent regard to form, ſuch as was uſual in other courts of juſtice. But, in a ſhort time, they drew within the vortex of their juriſdiction many other crimes than thoſe of hereſy; and, unſkilled in juriſprudence, ignorant of judicial proceſs, or determined to pitch upon ſuch methods as would be moſt tremendous and deciſive,

deciſive, they modelled the tribunal of Inquiſition after a new manner, repugnant to all the principles of equity, and inconſiſtent with juſtice or humanity.

By the rules of this Holy Office, as it is called, accuſed perſons are ſhut up in frightful dungeons, obliged to accuſe themſelves, ſometimes tortured till they do this; the charge and evidence are carried on in a clandeſtine manner, whilſt the poor priſoners are never confronted with witneſſes; and with infernal malignity they are ſometimes accuſed, condemned, and executed in one day, without the privilege of appeal.

In order to give the greater ſanction and authority to this newly erected tribunal, the Roman Pontif perſuaded ſome of the European Princes, to take the Inquiſitors under their ſpecial protection, to commit to the flames ſuch who were condemned by them, and to enact the ſevereſt laws againſt all heretics; in conſequence of which, many of all ranks fell victims to the moſt brutal and unrelenting cruelty.

Theſe arbitrary and barbarous proceedings exaſperated the people in ſeveral places, ſo that in the heat of indignation they ſlew ſome of the Inquiſitors, whoſe bloody diſpoſitions and outrages were no longer unknown. Innocent III. bent upon the deſtruction of thoſe who oppoſed his authority, applied for aſſiſtance to Philip Auguſtus, King of France, and to the Nobles of that nation, that they might concur with him in extirpating herefy, by fire and ſword. The Ciſtertian Monks were particularly zealous in the cauſe, and in name of the Pope publiſhed a cruſade againſt the Heretics. Theſe went by the general denomination of Albigenſes, and againſt them a numerous army was raiſed *A. D.* 1209. An open war commenced, which

which continued for many years with various ſucceſs, and which occaſioned a large effuſion of Chriſtian blood.

So vigorous were the efforts that were made by the adverſaries of the Church of Rome, that the Roman Pontif Honorius III. fearful of conſequences, engaged, by the alluring promiſe of moſt ample indulgences, the King of France, Lewis VIII. to march in perſon againſt them. This he accordingly did at the head of a numerous army, and his example was followed by his ſon and ſucceſſor Lewis the Saint. Raymond VII. of Tholouſe, who headed the Albigenſes, finding himſelf preſſed on all hands, agreed to a treaty of peace in the year 1229, highly unfavourable for himſelf and for the whole cauſe. It is true the victorious party made an undue and illegal uſe of the advantages they gained, and this excited freſh ferments and renewed the war: But the Albigenſes reaped no conſiderable benefit from it, and they loſt their powerful patron and defender the unfortunate Earl of Tholouſe, who, depreſſed by his misfortunes, died without male-iſſue in the year 1249.

Thus ended a civil war, in which Chriſtians fought againſt Chriſtians on a Religious account or pretext, the termination of which flattered the vanity and bigotry of the Church of Rome. It would make one ſhudder to deſcribe the dreadful devaſtations of theſe times, and the many horrid cruelties and murders committed againſt innocent Chriſtians, who ſtood up for the liberty of conſcience and the purity of Religion. It is computed, that no leſs than one million of them were ſlain in France alone, in a kind of religious war, ſuch as had been waged againſt the Saracens themſelves,

ſelves. * At laſt, overpowered, they fled into Provence, and the neighbouring Alps of the French territory, and found a ſhelter for their doctrine in thoſe places. Part withdrew into Calabria, and continued there a long while. Some paſſed into Germany, and fixed their reſidence in Bohemia, Poland and Livonia. Others, turning weſtward, obtained a happy refuge in Britain.

Whilſt the inferior clergy of the Church of Rome were now ſunk in ignorance, indolence and licentiouſneſs, thoſe of the ſacerdotal order who were raiſed to rank and authority, inſtead of promoting projects of reformation, or becoming models themſelves of piety and virtue, were wholly intent on ſchemes of ambition, committed crimes of the greateſt atrocity in their purſuit of them, and acted the part rather of tyrants than of religious rulers. The hiſtory of the Popes in a long ſucceſſion, is a glaring and melancholy demonſtration of this. They aſſerted, with amazing effrontery, that the Biſhops of Rome are the ſupreme Lords of the Univerſe, and that neither temporal Princes nor eccleſiaſtical Rulers have any lawful power in Church or State, but what they derive from them. In conſequence of this pernicious pretenſion, they claimed the right of diſpoſing of eccleſiaſtical benefices, and of conferring civil dominion, yea of dethroning Kings and Emperors according to their will. Such high and arrogant demands did meet indeed with oppoſition. Some conſidered the authority of councils as ſuperior to that of the Pontifs, and ſeveral European Princes, eſpecially the Kings of England and France, aſſerted their privileges with ſpirit and dignity. Yet ſuch

* Mede in Apoc. p. 503. Thuani Præfat. ad Henric. IV. p. 7.

ſuch was the power of ſuperſtition, ſo formidable were the Papal bulls of excommunication, and ſo various were the political connections or competitions that ſubſiſted between different powers, that Papal uſurpation, availing itſelf of theſe circumſtances, obtained too fixed a footing in the world.

Hitherto the Biſhops had enjoyed the privilege of nominating to ſmaller benefices. But now the Roman Pontifs claimed a power, not only of creating Biſhops and Abbots, but of ſupplying ſubordinate offices in the Church. The Epiſcopal order warmly remonſtrated againſt this invaſion, and Lewis IX. King of France, took particular precautions againſt it. For, in the year 1268, he ſecured the rights of the Gallican Church, by that famous edict known by the name of the *Pragmatic Sanction*, which relates, in a ſpecial manner, to eccleſiaſtical preferments. This ſtep, however, did not prevent the Roman Pontifs from proſecuting their deſigns, and Boniface VIII. maintained, in the moſt public manner, the ſupreme power and authority which he as Chriſt's vicegerent had over the Church univerſal. The legates whom he and his ſucceſſors deputed into different countries, ſpake in the ſame lordly ſtile, executed their commiſſion with a plenitude of deſpotiſm, diſpoſed of benefices for money, carried on an infamous traffic in relics and indulgences, excited tumults and factions, and behaved both in an inſolent and profligate manner.

The Roman Pontifs as they grew in opulence, enlarged their ambitious views, exerciſed the moſt arbitrary government in the Church, and ſought by all means to ſubject the Kings and Princes of the earth to their lordly dominion. Under Innocent III. and Nicolas III. their revenues greatly increaſed, partly from the events of war, and in a good meaſure alſo from the liberality of Princes and Potentates,

Potentates, devoted to the See of Rome, from motives of ſuperſtition or policy. Pope *Innocent* reduced the Prefect of Rome under his authority, who uſed to take an oath of allegiance to the Emperor, and made himſelf maſter of certain cities and territories, which he pretended had been an original part of St Peter's patrimony. Frederic II. confirmed to him and his ſucceſſors the immenſe donation of the wealthy Matilda, and alſo made a grant of additional lands.

This aſſuming Pontif diſpoſed of crowns and ſceptres both in Aſia and Europe. He gave a King to the Armenians, and promoted to regal rank *Primiſlaus* Duke of Bohemia. He crowned with his own hands Peter II. of Arragon, and publicly ſaluted him at Rome with the title of King, becauſe he had rendered his dominions tributary to the Church, whilſt he ſent the enſigns of royalty to the Duke of Bulgaria, by an extraordinary legate.

He raiſed Otho IV. to the imperial throne, in oppoſition to Philip Duke of Swabia. Again, he thundered out his excommunications againſt him, as being too refractory, and placed Frederic II. in his room.

King John of England, was treated by the imperious Pontif in the moſt ignominious manner. The Engliſh monarch had confirmed the election of John de Grey to the See of Canterbury, in oppoſition to Stephen Langton, whom the monks there had choſen and received by command of the Pope. The King was determined to chaſtiſe their inſolence, and to baniſh them the kingdom. The exaſperated Pontif laid the whole nation under an interdict, ſo that a ſtop was put to divine ſervice; all the churches were ſhut, and none of the ſacraments were adminiſtred except that of baptiſm.

The

The interdict failing to produce the intended effect, the Prince was excommunicated, and a papal bull followed about three years after, abſolving all ſubjects from their oath of allegiance to John, and commanding all perſons to avoid him on pain of excommunication. Not ſatisfied with all this, the tyrannical Pontif aſſembled a council of Cardinals and Biſhops, ſolemnly depoſed King John, and declared the throne of England vacant. He next wrote to Philip Auguſtus King of France, empowering him to make a conqueſt of England, and to unite that kingdom forever to his own dominions. The French monarch entered into the views of the Roman Pontif which were ſo favourable for him, undertook to execute the ſentence pronounced againſt John, and made vaſt preparations for the invaſion of his kingdom. To render theſe more effectual, Innocent publiſhed a bull, exhorting all Chriſtian Princes to ſecond the efforts of the French King, and promiſing to ſuch who embarked in the enterprize, the ſame privileges as were granted to the Cruſaders in Paleſtine. The Engliſh monarch aſſembled an army, and put his kingdom into a poſture of defence, reſolving if poſſible to repel his audacious enemies.

In this criſis of affairs, Pandulf, the Pope's legate arrives at *Dover*. There he found King John, and in the moſt artful manner exaggerated the grand armaments that were forming againſt him, and perſuaded him that the only method for ſecuring himſelf, was by ſubmitting entirely to the Roman See. John, involved in perplexity, diſtruſtful of his nobles, ſuſpicious of his troops, and doubtful of the event, meanly reſigned his very crown into the hands of the legate, who kept it for five days, and from whom he received it again as a preſent, at ſame time ſwearing fealty to the See of Rome

Rome as a vaſſal, and rendering his dominions feudatory to it. He became bound to pay an annual tribute of 700 marks for England, and 300 marks for Ireland, in acknowledgment of the Pope's ſupremacy; and further conſented, that if he, or any of his ſucceſſors, ſhould fail in the ſubmiſſion then ſtipulated, ſuch ſhould forfeit all title to the Engliſh throne. Such the abject ſpirit of the Engliſh monarch! Such the unbounded arrogance of the Roman Pontif!

Indeed the Popes of Rome carried matters with a high hand, particularly Nicolas IV, and Boniface VIII, whoſe extravagant claims and imperious tranſactions appear almoſt incredible. They claimed and exerciſed an abſolute power both in ſpirituals and temporals, affrighted kingdoms and countries with the thunder of their bulls, with their anathemas, excommunications, and interdicts; they ſummoned Princes and Sovereigns to their tribunals, depoſed Kings and Emperors at pleaſure. Thus they proved the ſcourges of mankind, occaſioned numberleſs conteſts and perpetual wars, whilſt with inſatiable ambition they ſought to ſubject the whole world to their ghoſtly empire, and to maintain the Papal hierarchy and tyranny. From theſe violent meaſures ſprang, in a particular manner, the two famous factions, called Guelphs and Ghibelines, the firſt eſpouſing the cauſe of the Pontifs, and the latter that of the Emperors, which involved all the Italian ſtates in the moſt unhappy diſſentions, and ſpread tumult and diſcord far and near.

The Popes of Rome ſtill continued to keep in ſight the Cruſades in Paleſtine, as from theſe Aſiatic wars they derived many fine opportunities, for augmentiug their opulence and authority. They and their legates endeavoured every where to

found the charge, and to revive the languiſhing zeal of the European Princes in this religious cauſe. At length a conſiderable number of the French nobility, entered into an alliance with the republic of Venice, who raiſed their reſpective forces, and ſet ſail for the eaſt. However, inſtead of ſteering their courſe directly for the Holy Land, they proceeded to Conſtantinople, and took that city by ſtorm in the year 1203.

They at firſt reſtored Iſaac Angelus to the imperial throne, and after that he and his ſon Alexius were put to death by Alexius Ducas, the Cruſaders made themſelves maſters a ſecond time of the imperial city, and created Baldwin Count of Flanders, Emperor of the Greeks. They on the contrary, elected Theodore Laſcaris of their own nation, in oppoſition to the Latin Emperor: And from this period two Emperors ruled in the Grecian ſtate, till the year 1261.

Another religious expedition was undertaken under the Pontificate of Honorius III. by the confederate forces of Italy and Germany. Andrew, King of Hungary, Leopold, Duke of Auſtria, Lewis, Duke of Bavaria, and various other Princes put themſelves at the head of this enterprize.

In the year 1220 they became maſters of Damietta, one of the ſtrongeſt cities in Egypt, and were fluſhed with ſanguine hopes of further ſucceſs. But theſe were ſoon blaſted by the deſtruction of their fleet, the want of proviſions, and the loſs of their late conqueſt.

Another grand armament was formed, which drew the attention of Europe, that was to be under the command of the Emperor Frederic II. Motives of intereſt as well as principles of ſuperſtition concurred to animate his zeal and invigorate his meaſures. He had married Iolanda daughter of the

the Count of Brienne, King of Jeruſalem, and by his alliance that kingdom was to devolve to him. However, ſo it was that various circumſtances poſtponed the Emperor's expedition for a conſiderable ſpace of time. Gregory IX. was ſo incenſed at the long delay, that in an haughty humour he excommunicated him. The Emperor at laſt ſet forward for Paleſtine in the year 1228; and thereupon the inſidious and perfidious Pontif made war againſt him in Apulia, and uſed his utmoſt endeavours to arm the European Princes againſt him.

Frederic, inſtead of puſhing the war with vigour, concluded a treaty of peace with the Sultan of Egypt in the year 1229. Among other articles, he ſtipulated, that he ſhould be put in poſſeſſion of the city and kingdom of Jeruſalem. Accordingly he made a triumphant entry into the holy city, and with his own hands placed the crown upon his head, amidſt the acclamations of the victorious Chriſtians. Afterwards, he returned immediately into Europe, to check the progreſs of the ambitious Pontif, and to quell the commotions which he had excited in his abſence. In this he likewiſe proved ſucceſsful. He defeated the Papal army, recovered the places he had loſt in Italy and Sicily, made peace with the Pope, and obtained from him an open and ſolemn abſolution.

Various other expeditions were ſet on foot, from time to time, againſt the Mahometan infidels.

In the year 1239, Theobald VI. Count of Champagne and King of *Navarre*, along with ſeveral French and German Princes, ſet out for Paleſtine.

The year following, Richard Earl of Cornwall, and brother to Henry III. King of England, likewiſe embarked. But their ſucceſſes did not anſwer expectations, a conſiderable body of Chriſtians

ſtians were defeated at Gaza, the Emperor's ambaſſadors confirmed the treaty their maſter had made, on all which accounts a truce was concluded on the beſt conditions the circumſtances of affairs could procure.

Notwithſtanding the daily decline of the Chriſtian intereſts in the eaſt, yet this did not diſcourage Lewis IX. King of France, from attempting to recover them. Accordingly, in the year 1248, he embarked with a formidable army for Egypt, propoſing to penetrate from thence into Syria and Paleſtine. Damietta, the firſt city in Egypt, ſubmitted to his victorious arms, and he obtained many advantages at firſt, which ſeemed to promiſe well. But the ſcene was ſoon reverſed; the horrors of peſtilence and famine overſpread the royal army, the King's brother the Earl of Artois, a valiant commander, was ſlain in an engagement; and within a few days after, the French Monarch, two other brothers, and the greateſt part of the army, were made priſoners of war, in a bloody battle that had been fought with ſingular valour and obſtinacy. An immenſe ranſom was paid for the French Monarch, of 500,000 livres, which, at this time, would amount to about L. 190,006 Sterling. Upon this, the King returned to France in the year 1254, with a handful of troops; and of 2800 illuſtrious Knights who accompanied him into Paleſtine, there now remained only one hundred.

Lewis was a Prince of invincible fortitude and magnanimity, whom no misfortunes could depreſs, he was extremely religious according to the taſte of the times, and zealous to a high degree for the extinction of infidels. He therefore embarked in another expedition, carried with him a numerous army, and was attended with a ſplendid retinue of Nobles,

Nobles. He ſet ſail for Africa with an intention of firſt converting the Mahometans in that part of the world, and of enriching himſelf by his conqueſts there, that ſo he might proſecute the war in Aſia with more vigour and ſucceſs. Upon his arrival on the African coaſt, he gained ſeveral advantages, which appeared to prognoſticate future victories, as to which, however, he was fatally diſappointed. A peſtilential diſeaſe broke out in his fleet and army, deſtroyed the greateſt part of both, and at laſt cut off the unfortunate monarch in the year 1270. He was the laſt of the European Princes that engaged in theſe ſacred expeditions. Their eyes were at laſt opened to ſee the romantic folly and impropriety of them; they began to reflect on the vaſt expence and complicated difficulties which attended them, and on that endleſs train of calamities which they had occaſioned. Diſſentions and jealouſies continually reigned in the Chriſtian armies: The profligate and cruel conduct of many who pretended to be the champions of the Croſs, exaſperated the Infidels, and ſome ſignal ſucceſſes which theſe had obtained, and many other circumſtances, made the Latin empire viſibly decline in the eaſt. The Roman Pontifs employed their utmoſt ſkill and influence to ſupport their tottering intereſt; but this was entirely overthrown in the year 1291, after an immenſe profuſion of blood and treaſure, during the courſe of two centuries; and from that period to the preſent time, Chriſtian Powers and Princes have had no footing in *Paleſtine*.

Almoſt all the monaſtic orders in the church of Rome had degenerated from their original inſtitution; and, inſtead of diſplaying in their lives and manners that ſanctity and contempt of the world to which they were led by their profeſſion, or that might have been expected from it, they exhibited

to

to public view the moſt offenſive examples of vice and licentiouſneſs. The many heretical ſects which ſprang up, availed themſelves of this ſhameful behaviour, affected the greateſt auſterity and mortification, became thereby extremely popular, and drew after them a vaſt number of followers. In order to obſtruct their progreſs, and to recover the ſinking credit of the monaſtic ſtate, it was judged proper, by the eccleſiaſtical rulers in this century, to encourage certain religious ſocieties, who might by the ſtrictneſs of their diſcipline, and the regularity of their conduct attract the veneration of mankind, create confidence, and be of real ſervice in ſupporting the Papal dominion. The Mendicant or Begging Friars, ſurpaſſed all the reſt in the purity of their morals, and in the ſanctimonious appearance which they aſſumed. According to the tenor of their inſtitution, they were to have no fixed revenues or poſſeſſions, and to depend on the voluntary alms and oblations of the people. The Roman Pontifs, with a view to render them perfectly ſubſervient to their intereſts, and the proper tools and engines of policy, placed all ſuch who took on them a vow of poverty, under their own peculiar protection, and conferred upon them a multiplicity of favours and privileges. When this was obſerved, their number grew to an enormous degree, ſwarms of them ſprang up through all the provinces in Europe, ſo that they became an intolerable burden both to Church and State.

Upon this, Gregory X. aſſembled a general council at Lyons, in the year 1272, reduced the extravagant multitude of Mendicants to four ſocieties, denominated Franſiſcans, Dominicans, the Carmelites, and Hermits of St Auguſtin.

Theſe four orders had the liberty of travelling whereſoever they pleaſed, of converſing with people of every rank, and of inſtructing the youth. By their

their ſanctimonious looks and demure deportment, they gained greatly upon the multitude, who beheld them with unuſual reſpect, and in proceſs of time they roſe to a high degree of importance. The Roman Pontifs repoſed ſingular truſt and confidence in them, and employed them in matters of the higheſt moment, not only of a ſpiritual but political nature.

But the Dominicans and Franciſcans outſhone their other brethren to a high degree, and rendered themſelves famous in the world. Theſe two fraternities did not confine themſelves within the duties of their ſacred profeſſion. Some of them taught in univerſities, and had the opportunity of moulding the principles and diſpoſitions of the riſing generation to an entire devotedneſs to the See of Rome. Others were promoted to the firſt ſtations in the Church; and many were advanced to civil preferments, entruſted with the ſecrets of the court and cabinet, with levying taxes, forming alliances, and concluding of treaties.

During the courſe of near three centuries, they governed church and ſtate with a commanding ſway, and were, before the Reformation, what the Jeſuits have been ſince that happy æra, the great props and pillars of the Papal Hierarchy, the ſoul and ſpring of the moſt important meaſures, and the capital directors of almoſt every religious or political movement.

In whatever capacity they acted, they emblazoned the majeſty and maintained the prerogatives of the Pontifs, were thoroughly devoted to the intereſts of the See of Rome, moſt induſtrious to advance her grandeur and opulence, and from thence they derived reciprocal ſupport and influence.

In order to indemnify them for their voluntary humility, the Roman Pontifs laviſhed upon theſe orders

ders many marks of diſtinguiſhed regard, and particularly the privilege of hearing confeſſion, and diſpenſing abſolution, without licence from the Biſhop, as alſo of granting indulgences, which proved an inexhauſtible ſource of opulence. This partial procedure was a manifeſt encroachment upon the ancient diſcipline of the Church, ſerved to excite envy among the other eccleſiaſtical orders, and occaſioned warm diſputes between the Epiſcopal and Mendicant bodies.

Theſe jarrings and diſſentions grew ſo violent, as ſometimes to produce dreadful diſorders and tumults in many countries, and even in Rome itſelf, under the eye of the Pontif.

The Dominicans and Franciſcans, elated with their proſperity, behaved with great arrogance upon many occaſions, and treated other orders in the Church with ſupercilious contempt. They boldly pretended to inſpiration itſelf, aſſerted that they alone knew the true method of ſalvation, vaunted of the ſuperior efficacy of their indulgences, and of their tranſcendent intereſt in the court of heaven.

They at length arrived to ſuch a height of ambition, as to claim powers and privileges inconſiſtent with all ſubordination, and that ſtruck at the ſupreme juriſdiction of the Pontifs themſelves. They afterwards fell into violent conteſts with one another, each order claiming the precedency, and that with mutual invective and animoſity. To crown all, the Franciſcans ſplit into various factions among themſelves concerning the rules of their order, and certain points of religion, which kindled a flame and ſpread diſturbances, which proved highly prejudicial to the repoſe and ſecurity of the Romiſh church *.

Among

* Dr Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. III. p. 62. &c.

Among the ſchool-divines of this century, the Dominican and Franciſcan Monks held the moſt conſiderable place; and they, by their jargon and ſubtilty, their metaphyſical diſtinctions, and endleſs quibbling, ſhed darkneſs and intricacy over the ſacred truths of religion, and diſguiſed its native ſimplicity. The Latin Pontifs were far from being offended at this; nay, they were well pleaſed to ſee the multitude kept in ignorance, ſo that they might enjoy the fairer opportunity for augmenting their power, and for ſupporting their ſyſtem of ſuperſtition. It is therefore the leſs ſurprizing to find fanatical and ridiculous ſects ſpringing up, that plainly indicate the falſe taſte of religion which prevailed in thoſe unhappy times, and which ſhew what flights of frenzy men can reach, when actuated by the force of Enthuſiaſm, and a blind zeal for miſtaken devotion.

I might mention that whimſical ſect called *Whippers*, or Flagellantes, who appeared in Italy *A. D.* 1260, and who ſoon multiplied in many other countries of Europe. They thought the only method of appeaſing the Deity was, by committing acts of cruelty upon themſelves. They therefore ran from one place to another like a diſtracted multitude, both through cities and deſarts, with whips and ſcourges in their hands, laſhing their naked bodies with ſullen ſeverity. Yet this wild behaviour was conſtrued into Chriſtian mortification and ſanctity, and was beheld with a ſtupid admiration by the gazing and undiſcerning populace.

Another enthuſiaſtical tribe were diſtinguiſhed by the title of *Brethren and Siſters of the free Spirit.* They ſpread through Italy, France and Germany, and ſeduced multitudes of both ſexes, by the pretended refinement of their notions and manners. They were called Beghards by the Germans and

Flemiſh, and in France they got the appellation of Beghines and Turlupins. They adopted a high, fantaſtical ſyſtem of myſtic theology, conjoined with falſe principles of Pantheiſtical philoſophy. They maintained that the ſoul of man was a real portion or particle of Deity, poſſeſſing divine perfections, and equal to the Son of God himſelf. They boaſted of a peculiar liberty which they had obtained through the Spirit, and of a total exemption from the obligations of the law. They condemned all kind of labour and induſtry, as what retarded the heaven-born mind in its progreſs towards perfection. They inculcated an entire abſtraction from the world, and a continued contemplation, till the ſoul was abſorbed in the boſom of divinity. They forbid the uſe of all external ordinances in religion, held nocturnal aſſemblies remote from public view, and behaved without regard to the decency and order of common life. Both men and women cloathed themſelves in a ſingular and whimſical manner, and begged their bread from houſe to houſe, ſhouting and ſhrieking in a barbarous tone, with an air and aſpect of ſuperſtitious delirium. Both Emperors and Popes thought proper to interpoſe their authority, for ſuppreſſing ſo pernicious a ſociety; and many were committed to the flames by the court of Inquiſitors *.

Various other heretical ſects appeared during this century, which oppoſed the received ſyſtem of religion, and indeed the evident doctrines of the goſpel, and advanced notions of a dangerous tendency. Beſides

* Thoſe who deſire a further account of the Beghards, which I have touched but tranſiently, may receive it in an ample manner from Dr Moſheim, and his judicious and elegant Tranſlator Dr Maclain, vol. III. p. 122. 123. &c. octavo Edition, to whoſe repreſentations of hiſtorical facts I pay great regard.

Beſides other methods taken to diſcountenance extirpate them, a council of Biſhops was ſolem aſſembled at Paris, to deliberate upon the growing evil; and they, conſidering the philoſophy of Ariſtotle as the fountain or occaſion of this inundation of hereſy, thought fit to prohibit the reading the books wrote by that Grecian ſage, and all prelecting upon them in public or private.

Innocent III. was extremely intent on promoting Papal power and ſuperſtition, and on eſtabliſhing ſuch articles of faith, ſuch modes of diſcipline, and ſuch kind of rites and ceremonies as were calculated to advance the credit of the Clergy, and the grandeur and opulence of the Church.

He preſcribed by law, and placed among duties of indiſpenſable obligation that of Auricular Confeſſion. By this a man is bound not merely to make a general acknowledgment of his faults to a Prieſt, but to enumerate all his ſins in a particular detail. Thus do the father-confeſſors gain a victorious aſcendancy over the conſcience and honour of mankind, ſcrew themſelves into the hiſtory of families, and obtain a maſtery and influence on ſome occaſions irreſiſtible.

This Pope alſo got the ſtrange doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation eſtabliſhed by law, in all its extent of abſurdity. It was no longer left to the option of any worſhipper to underſtand or explain the preſence of Chriſt in the Euchariſt, as he himſelf was diſpoſed, but his real preſence, and the converſion of the ſacred elements into the body and blood of the Lord, was univerſally impoſed as an article of faith; as if a trial of ſkill was to be made, to ſee how far the credulity and ſtupidity of mankind would go. To make it paſs more eaſily among the deluded multitude, the celebration of Maſs was accompanied with great pomp and magnificence, and

a train of myſterious ceremonies. That apartment of Church, in which was lodged the conſecrated, or rather the deified bread, was decorated with all imaginable ſplendor: It was exhibited with all the ſilence and ſolemnity of devotion; all muſt kneel in lowly adoration before it. It was carried through the ſtreets in triumphant proceſſion, under a rich canopy of ſtate, ſupported by Prieſts in their ſacerdotal veſtments, attended with illuminations, ringing of bells, and chanting of anthems. And even an annual feſtival was inſtituted in honour of the holy ſacrament, with a view to certify and aggrandize the doctrine of the real and corporeal preſence of Chriſt.

Indeed ſuperſtitious rites and ceremonies of every kind were multiplied without bounds, as if the whole of religion conſiſted in external ſhow and parade. This was carried to ſuch a pitch of frenzy, that in a theatrical manner, and chiefly at the obſervation of religious feſtivals, the miraculous diſpenſations of providence, and certain events in the Chriſtian hiſtory, were repreſented on a ſtage. Such tragic-comical ſpectacles could not but degrade the dignity of religion; and however ſuitable they might be to the vitiated taſte of the times, they muſt appear to a ſerious unprejudiced mind, a licentious proſtitution of ſacred myſteries.

Boniface VIII. was the firſt who inſtituted the famous year of Jubilee at Rome *A. D.* 1299. It is celebrated with the higheſt grandeur and magnificence, indulgences are then liberally diſpenſed, and a plenary pardon of ſin is granted to thoſe who make confeſſion of their offences, and who viſit as penitent pilgrims, the holy churches of St Peter and St Paul at Rome.

Theſe jubilees were to be obſerved every hundredth year, but when the Roman Pontifs found, from

from agreeable experience, that they greatly augmented the dignity and revenues of the Church, and that they drew an amazing multitude of people to the ſeat of Papal power and ſuperſtition, from which various advantages might be derived, they ſhortened the period, and ordained the ſame to be celebrated every fiftieth year, and afterwards once every twenty-five years.

Some have traced them as an evident imitation of the famous *ſeculur games* *, that had been ſolemnized in Pagan Rome, with ſuch remarkable pomp and pageantry. But indeed a vaſt many more of the Romiſh rites and obſervances, are manifeſtly borrowed from the ſuperſtitious tenets and uſages of Heatheniſm, to the diſcredit of Chriſtianity, whoſe genuine luſtre and ſublimity are thereby tarniſhed and debaſed.

In the *fourteenth* century, various and vigorous attempts were made by the Roman Pontifs to renew the Cruſade againſt the Saracens and Turks in Paleſtine. All the arts of perſuaſion were employed to engage the European Princes to embark a-freſh in this holy war, for the honour of their religion, and for the extirpation of Mahometan Infidels who oppoſed it. Immenſe ſums were raiſed with this view, indulgences plentifully diſtributed, ample promiſes made, a fleet was equipt by the Pope, John XXII. in the year 1309, an army was raiſed by Philip de Valois, King of France, in the year 1330, and a formidable one aſſembled *A. D.* 1363 by John the French Monarch, who was to command it in perſon. Yet notwithſtanding all theſe grand preparations, various unfavourable events interveened to prevent execution, and all the projects for a religious expedition proved abortive and died away.

In

* Lettres de M. Chais ſur les Jubiles, tom. 1. p. 53, 54, &c.

That Pope was a man of an arrogant, aſſuming, and enterprizing ſpirit, and aimed at abſolute deſpotiſm both in Church and State. To ſhew his authority both in ſpirituals and temporals, he uſed to make his appearance upon public occaſions, ſometimes in his Pontifical habit, at other times in Imperial robes, and took this for his motto, *Ecce Duo Gladii.* The French Monarch was high-ſpirited, firm, and intrepid, and endeavoured to convince the Princes of Europe that it was not impoſſible to give ſome check to the aſpiring deſigns of the See of Rome.

Boniface was highly diſſatisfied with the alliance which Philip had concluded with the Emperor, and uſed every artifice to get it diſſolved. He alſo demanded that the Earl of *Flanders* and his children, who had rendered themſelves obnoxious to his Holineſs, ſhould be delivered into his hands. All propoſitions with reſpect to both theſe points were, however, perfectly diſregarded by the French King. He likewiſe accuſed and impriſoned the Biſhop of Pamiers, a creature and tool of the Pope, as guilty of monopolies, and exciting ſedition. The Roman Pontif was hereupon much exaſperated, and wrote letters to Philip in the moſt inſolent ſtrain, aſſerting in the boldeſt manner, ſuprome dominion over all Princes and people. He publiſhed a bull, declaring that Chriſt had granted an unlimited power to his Church, that all mankind were ſubjected to the Biſhops of Rome; and that ſuch who denied this were to be reputed Heretics, and incapable of ſalvation. In a brief addreſſed to the King, he ſays, "We would have your Majeſty to know, that you "are ſubject to us in all things both ſpiritual and "temporal."

The French Monarch ordered theſe bulls and briefs to be burnt, and aſſembled the ſtates of his realm,

realm, who proteſted againſt the Pope's pretenſions in civil matters. They likewiſe drew up an anſwer to Boniface in terms of high contempt, and expreſſed thus: "Philip, by the grace of God, "King of the Franks, to *Boniface*, who ſets up for "Sovereign Pontif, little or no health. Be it known "to your Great Extravagance, that we are not "ſubject to any perſon whatſoever, as to what re-"gards temporals; and that collation to eccleſiaſ-"tical benefices belong to us by royal right."

Philip alſo ordered William de Nogeret, a noted lawyer, to draw out a charge againſt the Pope for a great many crimes, particularly Hereſy and Simony, and demanded that a general Council ſhould be conveened in order to depoſe him from the Pontificate. Boniface, on the other hand, thundered out a bull of excommunication againſt the King and all his adherents.

In mean time, Nogeret was detached into Italy, to kindle a ſedition, to ſeize on the Pope's perſon, and to convey him to Lyons, where Philip propoſed to aſſemble a Council. This famous and active lawyer, formed an alliance with the powerful houſe of the *Colonnas*, then at enmity with his Holineſs, levied an army, and made Boniface priſoner. He treated him with the higheſt indignity, and vented his rage to ſuch a degree, as to give him a blow with an iron gauntlet. The inhabitants of *Anagni*, moved by pity and ſuperſtition, reſcued the unfortunate Pontif, and conducted him to Rome, where he ſoon ended his days, overwhelmed with grief and indignation.

His ſucceſſor, Benedict XI. repealed the ſentence of excommunication which ſtood againſt the King, but could not be perſuaded to abſolve Nogeret. But upon his death, Philip formed a ſcheme for promoting a French Prelate to the Pontificate, in

whom he might repoſe entire confidence. Accordingly *Bertrand de Got*, Archbiſhop of Bourdeaux, was elected to the See of Rome *A. D.* 1305, who aſſumed the name of Clement V.

This was an important victory obtained by the French King, which he improved to great advantage. Through his intrigue and perſuaſion, he prevailed on Clement to remain in France, and to remove the Papal reſidence from Rome to Avignon, where it continued for 70 years, which the Italians call, by way of ſneer, the Babyloniſh captivity.

This event proved extremely prejudicial to the intereſt of the Romiſh church. The Gallic Popes were not beheld with the ſame veneration as thoſe of Rome. During their diſtance from the proper ſeat of government, innumerable factions ſprang up which oppoſed their authority; the Gibellines, their old inveterate foes, gathered ſtrength, tumults and civil wars prevailed in Rome and Italy. The territories, which conſtituted St Peter's patrimony, were ravaged, the decrees and bulls of the Holy Father were treated with irreverence both by word and writing, and a ſpirit of oppoſition began to ſhew itſelf from this date, in many parts of Europe. Beſides, the French Pontifs, receiving very ſmall revenues from their dominions in Italy, had recourſe to many expedients of an oppreſſive nature, in order to ſupply the Apoſtolic treaſury. The ſale of indulgences and of benefices was increaſed, new taxes and tributes were deviſed, *reſerves*, *proviſions*, and *expectatives*, as they were termed, and other avaricious impoſitions, were multiplied, which created general diſguſt, and alienated the minds of many from the church of Rome.

It was Gregory II. who took the reſolution of quelling, if poſſible, the diſorders and tumults which raged

raged in Rome and Italy, and of recovering the cities and provinces which had been taken from the Roman See. With this view he transferred the Pontifical ſeat from Avignon to Rome *A. D.* 1376. He found matters in very great confuſion, did not eſcape many perſonal inſults, and remarked with regret the low ebb to which Papal Majeſty was reduced. But amidſt ſchemes of reſtoration at Rome, and ſome inclinations of returning to France, he was carried off by death in the year 1378.

Hereupon the College of Cardinals aſſembled in order to chuſe a ſucceſſor. The people of Rome, afraid leaſt a Frenchman ſhould be advanced to the Papal dignity, and ſollicitous to have a Roman or Italian preferred, roſe in a tumultuous manner, ſurrounded the Conclave, cried out with one voice, *Romano lo volemo Papa;* and threatned to break open the doors, and cut the Cardinals to pieces, except they gratified their demands. Alarmed at ſuch an uproar, and ſuſpicious of conſequences, the electors promoted to the Popedom *Bartolemeo Pregnano*, Archbiſhop of *Bari*, and a native of Naples, who took the name of Urban VI.

No ſooner was he inveſted with his new title and dignity, than he behaved ſo impolitically, and with ſuch inſufferable pride, as to create general diſlike, eſpecially among the leading Cardinals. They therefore retired to Fondi, and thought proper to declare the former election null as matter of force, and raiſed to the Pontificate Robert Count of Geneva, who aſſumed the deſignation of Clement VII. Thus Chriſtendom beheld two Popes at one time, each claiming ſovereignty and ſupremacy; and which was the true one, became a queſtion of much controverſy and dubiety.

Urban continued at Rome, but the caſtle of St Angelo held out for Clement. The Romans however

however laid ſiege to it, after ſome time made themſelves maſters of the ſame, and then demoliſhed it. Clement reſided at Avignon, and his cauſe was eſpouſed in France, Spain, Scotland, Lorrain, Savoy, Sicily and Naples. On the other hand, Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, Pruſſia, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, acknowledged the authority of Urban, as alſo moſt of the cities in Tuſcany and Lombardy. In England, the deputies ſent by the two Competitors were heard in Parliament, and thereupon the election and right of Urban were ſolemnly recognized.

Thus the union of the Latin church under one ſupreme head, was diſſolved by this great weſtern ſchiſm. Violent animoſities, factions, tumults and wars ſprang from hence, which embroiled Europe for half a century, and occaſioned great diſtreſs and calamity. The intereſts of real religion were neglected, amidſt the jarring of parties, and the claims of ambition. The Clergy, inflamed with political reſentments, divided in opinion, and earneſtly contending about the rightful Vicar of Chriſt, forgot all zeal for his Religion, and ſank into deeper corruption. And the people ſaw, with aſtoniſhment and with all the pangs of ſuperſtitious heſitation and uncertainty, their ghoſtly rulers, from whom they were taught to look for ſalvation, miſerably divided among themſelves, and thundering out anathemas againſt one another, whilſt two or three different Popes at one time claimed obedience.

Nevertheleſs, even from theſe ſcenes of confuſion, ſome good conſequences aroſe, which, in the final iſſue, proved propitious both to civil and religious liberty.

The grandeur and authority of the Roman Pontifs underwent a dark eclipſe, a ſpirit of enquiry and

and oppoſition was awakened, Princes and Potentates became judges and umpires to decide the rights of Papacy, and people were led to deſpiſe the pretences of religion in thoſe who only contended for earthly dominion, and to imagine that the Church of Chriſt might make a ſhift to ſubſiſt by itſelf, under the care of Providence, without the lordly ſway and ſupremacy of a viſible Head.

Urban died in the year 1389, and Clement in the year 1394, but neither of theſe events put a period to the partition of the Pontificate. The Italian Cardinals who were attached to the firſt, elected a Neapolitan to the See of Rome, called Boniface IX; whilſt the French Cardinals advanced a Spaniard to the Pontificate, known by the name of Benedict XIII. Various attempts were made for reconciling differences, and putting an end to ſo formidable a ſchiſm, which threatned deſtruction to the Church. Emperors, Princes, and Prelates united their councils, and projected various ſchemes with this ſalutary and pacific view.

The method of Ceſſion was generally judged the moſt plauſible; but each Pontif obſtinately refuſed to reſign the Papal chair, and all meaſures of accommodation proved abortive, which produced many diſagreeable effects. The Gallican church thereupon held a Council at Paris in the year 1397, and renounced all ſubjection to both Popes, which withdrawment was approved by the King, and publiſhed throughout France.

It was about the year 1360, that *John Wickliff*, Rector of Lutterworth, and Profeſſor of Divinity at Oxford, rendered himſelf famous, and filled not only England, but almoſt all Europe with his doctrine. He was a Doctor of great parts and penetration, and could not but openly condemn, both in preaching and writing, the tyranny and ſuperſtition

ſtition of the Church of Rome. He oppoſed with great zeal the errors of Tranſubſtantiation, the adoration of the Hoſt, the Seven Sacraments, Prayers for the dead, a ſtate of Purgatory, the Worſhip of ſaints and images, and all the principal corruptions and ſuperſtitions of the times. He inveighed bitterly againſt the vicious lives of the Monks and Clergy, and was a great enemy to all the Mendicant Friars. In the warmeſt manner he recommended to the laity the peruſal and ſtudy of the Holy Scriptures, and tranſlated them into the Engliſh language.

Great numbers of people embraced his opinions, he was powerfully ſupported by perſons of eminent diſtinction; the univerſity of Oxford patronized him, and his books were read in their public ſchools and colleges, till they were condemned and prohibited by the Council of Conſtance in the next century.

Yet did not he himſelf eſcape proſecution and trouble. A council was held at London, *A. D.* 1377, to which he was ſummoned by *Simon Sudbury* Archbiſhop of Canterbury.

Wickliff went there, accompanied with the Duke of Lancaſter, who at that time had the greateſt ſhare in the government of the kingdom. He happily eſcaped the danger that threatned him, defended himſelf, and was abſolved.

But another proceſs was revived againſt him in the year 1385. Two Councils were conveened at London and Oxford, and there he did not meet with ſo favourable a fate. The opinions which he taught were condemned as heretical and erroneous, yet he himſelf retired ſafely to Lutterworth, and died in peace, *A. D.* 1387.

But his doctrines did not die with him;—he left many followers, and theſe multiplied to a great degree,

degree, both at home and abroad, who were remarkable for their zeal and fidelity, many of whom witneſſed a good confeſſion even unto death.

They went by the name of Wickliffites, and ſometimes of Lollards, by way of profane contempt, alluding to the German etymology of that word, which denotes a perſon who is continually praiſing God, or ſinging hymns to his honour. Others would derive this appellation from one Walter Lollard who preached in Germany about the year 1315 againſt the authority of the Pope, the Interceſſion of ſaints, the Maſs, extreme Unction, as well as againſt other ceremonies and ſuperſtitions of the Church of Rome, and who was burned alive at *Cologn*, *A. D.* 1322 *.

It is acknowledged by thoſe who are well verſed in the hiſtory of theſe times, that ſcience and learning in general, as alſo the knowledge of real religion, were reduced to a low ebb. Scholaſtic theology and myſticiſm were predominant in their reſpective extremes. Logical doctors or philoſophical divines, ſtood in array againſt thoſe of the *Biblical* Party, and both were continually engaged in a ſeries of mutual controverſy.

Many, both of the Greeks and Latins, gave into *Ariſtotelian* notions, and followed the rules of the Peripatetics in expounding the doctrines of Religion. They wreſted the Sacred Writings, in order to accommodate them to their own meaning, and cloathed them with a myſterious, abſtract air, remote from vulgar views. They delighted in abſtruſe and metaphyſical argumentation, which frequently degenerated into ſophiſtry, and preſumptuouſly

* For a full and particular account of the Lollards, I refer the curious Reader to Dr Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. Eng. by Dr Maclain, vol. III. p. 184, 185, *&c.*

tuouſly brought Divine Revelation to the teſt and tribunal of human philoſophy. The Dominicans and Franciſcans were forward in this liſt, took great freedom in all their diſputations, explained Scripture with a boundleſs latitude, and thereupon often ran into fooliſh and dangerous opinions. Theſe philoſophical theologiſts likewiſe diſagreed among themſelves, which gave riſe to two famous ſects, the *Scotiſts* and Thomiſts, which ſubſiſt to this day, the one named from John Duns Scotus an Engliſhman, and of the Franciſcan order; the other from Thomas Acquinas, whoſe tenets were warmly eſpouſed by the Dominicans. There are many different points about which they contend, but in a more peculiar manner, concerning the nature and extent of the Divine operation upon the human mind, the will of man, the meaſure of ſupernatural grace that is neceſſary to ſalvation, the unity or perſonal identity of man, and the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary.

The Myſtics, whilſt they diſcarded human wiſdom and philoſophy, were ſometimes diſreſpectful to Scripture itſelf, and ſeemed to ſubſtitute in room of the written Word, miraculous impulſes of the Spirit, Platonic notions and extatic tranſports. Yet there were ſome among them of eminent piety and of more moderation, who excelled in Biblical learning, and drew from the ſacred Writings, as a pure perennial fountain, all their ſublime ſentiments of devotion and virtue. Others again, who were diſowned by this more rational party, ran into all the frenzy of fanaticiſm, indulged to enthuſiaſtic flights and viſions, and rambled from place to place with gloomy looks and macerated bodies, and retailed opinions inconſiſtent with Chriſtianity or humanity.

A-kin

A-kin to theſe were the Quietiſts, a ſect which very much infeſted the Greek church. Theſe enjoined a total abſtraction from the world, an intenſe courſe of contemplation, and boaſted of a Divine illumination, which, in an extraordinary manner, diffuſed ſerenity and joy through the ſoul. They, in order to obtain this, were accuſtomed to ſit in ſolitude, ſteady and penſive, with their eyes fixed immoveably on ſome particular object. Thereupon they pretended that an internal radiant light beamed upon them, which they called the Glory of God, and the ſplendor with which Chriſt ſhone forth, at his transfiguration upon the Mount.

Very different from this *ſtill* and contemplative ſect, was that of the Dancers, which aroſe in the year 1373 at Aix-la-Chapelle, and which from thence was diſſeminated through many places in Flanders.

Both ſexes among them were ſo ridiculous, as to imagine dancing a part of devotion, or as preparatory to it. And in this exerciſe they continued ſo long, and with ſuch violent agitation, till, quite exhauſted and breathleſs, they droped into a fainting fit. During this interval, they were favoured, as they ſaid, with extraordinary viſions.

Such the meanneſs or madneſs of men, when actuated by falſe principles and enthuſiaſtical notions; when they forſake the calm dictates of reaſon, the ſober maxims of religion, and the infallible oracles of Divine Truth.

The falſe doctrines, the abſurb ceremonies and ſuperſtitions, and the intolerable tyranny of Popery, made many to ſee it proper to ſeparate from the Church of Rome, and to ſtrike out into ſome new path in Religion, whilſt every one was not ſufficiently inſtructed either to conduct himſelf or direct others aright. Ignorance was the infelicity

of thoſe times, the minds of the multitude were poiſoned with enthuſiaſtical or ſuperſtitious notions, they had not free acceſs to the written Word, and Monks and Prieſts were too ready to inveigle and bewilder any who did not yield them implicit ſubmiſſion, to invent calumnies againſt them, or to exaggerate their faults and failings *.

The bloody inquiſitors availed themſelves of all this, and, like ſo many cruel executioners, ſtood always ready to ſtrike the blow. They knew no diſtinction of ſects, but all who oppoſed the Church of Rome or any of her tenets, were by them branded with the odious name of Heretics, and treated accordingly. They, with great aſſiduity, hunted for the remains of the Waldenſes, Cathariſts and Apoſtoliſts, wherever they could be found. They kept up a perpetual fire of perſecution againſt the brethren and ſiſters of the free ſpirit, who went under the common appellation of Beghards and Beguines. Theſe affected very high ſtrains of devotion, in contempt of external means and ordinances, and delighted to exhibit a myſterious and chimerical ſyſtem of religion. Margaret Poretta, who made a conſpicuous figure amongſt them, endeavoured to prove in an elaborate performance, that the ſoul when abſorbed in the love of God, was entirely ſecure from all ſin, was freed from the reſtraint of every law, and might ſafely gratify all its paſſions, without incurring guilt. She ſhared a melancholy fate, and was burnt at Paris along with one of the brethren. Some of theſe people were more eaſy and moderate in their ſentiments of religion, and were diſtinguiſhed as belonging to what was called,—the right and approved claſs, —whilſt

* Roman Catholic writers are often guilty in this reſpect; even Dupin appears to me frequently to miſtake, or miſrepreſent in his Hiſtory, thoſe whom he ſtyles Heretics.

—whilſt others ran into all the wildneſs of myſticiſm.

Their numbers increaſed in many places, notwithſtanding the ſeverity uſed for their extirpation, ſo that many of them were conſigned to the flames during the courſe of this century, in Italy, France, and Germany.

The Knights Templars, who had been ſo long eſtabliſhed in Paleſtine, deſerve to be ranked amongſt the number of heretics, if wickedneſs is accounted, as it ought to be, the worſt hereſy in the world. Theſe were accuſed, particularly by Philip the Fair, as guilty of the moſt atrocious crimes, and enemies to all religion. Clement V. was averſe for ſome time to liſten to any charge brought againſt them. At laſt, moved by the importunity of the French Monarch, and other conſiderations, he reſolved to proceed againſt them. Accordingly, by orders of the Pope, all the Templars, diſperſed through the different countries in Europe, were ſeized and impriſoned upon a fixed day, when totally inapprehenſive of the impending blow. Their rich revenues were diſtributed among other orders, particularly the Knights of Malta, or confiſcated to the Princes within whoſe kingdoms their poſſeſſions lay, and the whole order was ſolemnly ſuppreſſed by the council of Vienna, *A. D.* 1311. Some are of opinion that theſe unfortunate Knights met with a hard and unjuſt fate, conſidering, that other religious ſocieties in the Church of Rome had degenerated as well as them from their original inſtitution, and were chargeable with great enormities. Many of the Templars were tortured and put to death, who inſiſted on their innocence to the very laſt. But large allowances ought perhaps to be made for the violent

lent reſentment which the French King had conceived againſt them *.

Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory informs us, that in this century freſh attempts were made to bring about a reconciliation between the Greek and Latin Churches. The Turks were daily enlarging their dominion, of which the Greeks grew extremely jealous, and theſe intimated ſome inclinations to ſubmit to the Church of Rome, that from thence they might more readily draw ſuccours againſt the common foe of Chriſtianity. With this view, *Andronicus* junior, ſent an ambaſſador into the Weſt in the year 1339. Another Grecian deputation waited upon Clement VI. *A. D.* 1349. A third embaſſy was ſent to Innocent VI. for the ſame pacific purpoſe, in the year 1356. At laſt the Greek Patriarch went to Rome in the year 1367, in order to negotiate in perſon ſo important an affair, and was followed by the Emperor himſelf, *A. D.* 1369. He condeſcended to publiſh a confeſſion of his faith, to ſhew its conformity with that of the Latins, and uſed every prudent method to re-eſtabliſh a good underſtanding between the parties. But the major part of the Greeks ſtill retained an unconquerable averſion to the Latin Church, and could not be prevailed on to come into the requiſite terms of accommodation, ſo that the project of a compromiſe and union proved abortive.

In the *fifteenth* century an important revolution took place, which ended in the ruin of the Grecian empire, and proved extremely prejudicial to the Chriſtian cauſe. The Turks, a fierce and warlike people, made themſelves maſters of Conſtantinople in the year 1453, under the command of *Mahomet* II. a Prince of accompliſhed parts, and of an enterprizing ſpirit. One part of that great city was

* Vid. Putean's Hiſtoire de la condemnation des Templiers.

was taken by ſtorm, the other capitulated upon terms. Hence it was, that both the Chriſtian and Mahometan religions were there profeſſed even in a public manner. The former was maintained in that quarter which had ſurrendered on articles, at leaſt during the courſe of this century, whilſt the other was obliged to ſubmit to the religious impoſitions of the victor. Too ſoon however was the privilege reſerved for the Chriſtians invaded, and in proceſs of time it was almoſt reduced to a ſhadow, and loaded with ſevere reſtrictions, under the ſuperſtitious ſway of Mahometan Princes.

Along with their victorious arms, ignorance and barbariſm ruſhed in with a mighty torrent, overſpread Greece with ſurprizing rapidity, and made the oriental muſes languiſh and decay. The republic of letters wore however a more placid and promiſing aſpect in the Latin world. There the liberal arts and ſciences were cultivated with care, and were tenderly cheriſhed under the patronage and munificence of ſeveral Princes and Popes who were diſtinguiſhed for taſte and refinement, particularly Alphonſus VI. King of Naples, the illuſtrious family of the *Medicis* in Italy, and Nicholas V.

The Weſt received a vaſt acceſſion of literature upon the reduction of Conſtantinople, which was in this reſpect, of unſpeakable advantage. From that period many of the moſt eminent Greek *Literati* removed into Italy, and other countries of Europe, inſtructed the youth in all the various branches of erudition, publiſhed uſeful compoſitions of their own, and many accurate editions of Greek and Latin authors, and diffuſed every where, a love of learning and ſcience. In conſequence of this, many academies were founded in Italy, France and Germany, libraries were multiplied at a great expence, and generous proviſion was made for the encouragement

encouragement of learned men, and of ſtudious youth ambitious of literary glory.

About this time a moſt fortunate event occurred, highly auſpicious to the intereſts of knowledge, and to every valuable improvement. The noble art of Printing was diſcovered in the year 1440, by *Lawrent Coſter* of Harlem. He firſt invented the wooden moveable types; *John Guttemburg* of Mentz, contrived metallic types which were carved; *Schoffer* of Straſburg, perfected the art, by caſting the types in an iron mould, and by giving them a more equal frame and better poliſh *. This admirable invention ſerved to propagate knowledge at an eaſy rate, with an accuracy and facility unknown to former times, brought to light many valuable volumes of antiquity which lurked in obſcurity among the Monks, circulated to a greater extent the compoſitions of the moderns, and excited a general curioſity and thirſt for ſcience and improvement.

Before the Greeks arrived in Italy, Ariſtotle reigned without a rival, and all who were led into philoſophical reſearches viewed him with veneration, and followed him with implicit ſervility. But now an unexpected revolution took place in the empire of learning, and the Grecian ſages, captivated with the charms of Platonic philoſophy, endeavoured to ſupplant the Stagyrite, perſuaded the moſt ingenious among the Latins to abandon the dry logic and metaphyſical ſubtilty of the Peripatetics, and to adopt the ſerene and ſublime wiſdom of the immortal Plato. *Coſmo de Medicis*, enchanted with the ſyſtem of this eloquent philoſopher, formed a ſcheme of founding a Platonic academy at *Florence*. He ordered the works of the Athenian ſage, and of his moſt renowned diſciples to

* Gerard Meerman's Origines Typographicæ.

to be tranſlated into Latin, and gave great encouragement to a general ſtudy and imitation of them. In conſequence of this, two philoſophical ſects aroſe, who long diſputed with mutual vehemence, whether Ariſtotle or Plato was the greateſt philoſopher; whilſt a third party ſteered a middle courſe between the two, and aimed at a coalition of their different opinions. Scholaſtic theology, which dealt in intricate queſtions and in a jargon of abſtract terms, and which was ſupported by the Dialecticians, loſt ground, and began to be diſreliſhed. On the other hand, the Myſtics gradually gained an aſcendant, who were defended by the Platonics, to whoſe refined notions they partly approached, and who daily roſe in the eſteem of the public.

The weſtern ſchiſm was ſtill continued and fomented by the obſtinacy of the contending Pontifs. Boniface IX. reſided at Rome, and Benedict XIII. fixed his abode in Avignon. Upon the death of the former, Innocent VII. was raiſed to the Pontificate by the partizans of his predeceſſor. He ſoon dying, they elected in his place Angeli Corrario, a Venetian Cardinal, who aſſumed the name of Gregory XII. A project of accommodation was planned by ſome who wiſhed well to the peace and tranquility of the Church, and both Pontifs bound themſelves by an oath to abdicate the Papal-chair, if that was needful, which ſacred obligation they, however, violated in a moſt ſhameful manner. In order to heal this Papal diviſion, a Council was aſſembled at Piſa, *A. D.* 1409, who acted with ſingular ſpirit and vigour. It conſiſted of 22 Cardinals, 4 Patriarchs, 12 Archbiſhops, 67 Biſhops in perſon, 85 deputies, a conſiderable number of Abbots, Generals and Procurators of Orders, Deputies of Chapters, and 67 Ambaſſadors from Kings and Sovereign Princes.

They

They paſſed ſentence of condemnation againſt the two contending parties, depoſed them from the Pontificate, and declared them guilty of perjury and contumacy. They afterwards proceeded to elect Peter of Candia, who took the title of Alexander V. Notwithſtanding this, Benedict and Gregory conveened councils of their own, and continued to exerciſe the functions of the Papacy, ſo that the Chriſtian Church was rent into three great factions, each owning a ſupreme leader, which proved a fruitful ſource of contention and calamity.

Alexander died at Bologna, in the year 1410, when his Cardinals promoted a Neapolitan, who aſſumed the name of John XXIII. a man devoid of religion and integrity.

The Emperor Sigiſmund, and ſeveral other European Princes, were extremely deſirous of reſtoring peace to the Church, and of uniting it under one ſpiritual head. To accompliſh this important end, it was judged neceſſary to aſſemble a general Council, which at laſt was agreed to, and which was ſummoned to meet at Conſtance in the year 1414. This celebrated Council was graced with the preſence of the Emperor himſelf, a great number of German Princes attended in perſon, many Ambaſſadors from different States in Europe made their appearance, as did alſo the Pontif John, with a multitude of Cardinals, Biſhops, and Abbots. This grand Aſſembly aſſerted, in the ſtrongeſt manner, the abſolute ſupremacy of a general Council, its undoubted authority to determine every thing that regards faith or manners, and declared that all perſons of whatever rank or denomination, even the Roman Pontifs themſelves, were ſubject to their juriſdiction and bound by their decrees, as repreſenting the Univerſal Church, which derives its power directly from Chriſt himſelf.

It

It afterwards proceeded to depoſe John XXIII. on account of many crimes of which he was convicted. The Council continuing to ſit upon the affairs of the Church, Gregory XII. did, by proxy, voluntarily reſign the Pontificate into their hands in the year 1415. About two years thereafter, the ſame Council degraded Benedict XIII. and with an unanimous voice placed in the Papal-chair Otto de Collonna, who aſſumed the name of Martin V. by which peace and union were happily reſtored.

The deciſions and proceedings of the council of Conſtance gave a fatal blow to Pontifical pride. The world beheld with indignation the lordly ambition of the See of Rome, and of thoſe who pretended to be the ghoſtly rulers of the Church, whoſe arrogance, contention, and obſtinacy, ſo frequently produced the moſt deplorable evils.

The mouths of men were opened to inveigh with vehemence againſt the vices of the Clergy, the enormities of the Monaſtic Orders, and the general corruption and degeneracy of the Church, both in its head and members.

The eyes of Europe were fixed on this famous council, and conceived ſanguine hopes of a thorough reformation, ſuch as ſhould ſet bounds to the deſpotiſm of the Roman Pontifs, give a check to the growing licentiouſneſs of the Eccleſiaſtical Order, revive the rules of Primitive diſcipline, and replace religion on a better footing. The aſſembled Fathers acknowledged the neceſſity of this ſalutary work, and did not ſeem diſpleaſed with thoſe who urged the execution of it. Yet all this was policy and pretext, whilſt many difficulties were artfully ſtarted, many evaſions ingeniouſly deviſed, with a view to prevent or poſtpone ſo beneficial a project. Powerful paſſions and prejudices prevailed, mutual jealouſies and jarring intereſts interfered, and the

dignitaries of the Church were inwardly averſe to a reformation which might ſtrike upon themſelves, or obſtruct their darling deſigns. The very Pontif who was newly created Martin V. in whom many repoſed great confidence, was no ſooner inveſted with the Papal dignity, than he gave unexpected evidence of a fixed intention, to quaſh all meaſures that might tend to reſtore the purity of religion, or to ſtrengthen the reins of diſcipline. Thus it came to paſs, that this illuſtrious Council was diſſolved upon the 22d of April *A. D.* 1418, after it had ſat three years and ſix months, without effecting what was one principal end of their meeting, and what all good men ardently wiſhed.

About five years after this, Martin was prevailed on to ſummon a new Council. This was countenanced by his ſucceſſor Eugenius IV. and was held at Baſil in the year 1431. The two capital points on which they were to deliberate were, the union of the Greek and Latin Churches, and a general reformation of the whole. The members of this grand convocation appear to have formed a ſincere deſign of effectuating both theſe ends. But the ſcheme of a reformation alarmed the Roman Pontif, nothing was more remote than this from his thoughts: He employed every ſtratagem to obſtruct it, and twice attempted to diſſolve the Council which counteracted his moſt ſettled purpoſes.

They, however, continued to ſit, aſſerted their privileges, inſiſted on the ſuperiority of general Councils to the Popes themſelves, and enacted ſeveral laws, by which *Annats*, *Expectatives*, *Reſerves*, *Proviſions*, and other Papal impoſitions were aboliſhed. The haughty Pontif, exaſperated at theſe proceedings, pretended, by an edict which he iſſued, to diſſolve the council at *Baſil*, and conveened another in oppoſition to it, which accordingly met at Ferrara,

Ferrara, and which he opened in perſon in the year 1438.

The plague breaking out there the following year, it was removed to Florence, where the members, under Papal direction, excommunicated the Council of *Baſil*, and declared all their acts and proceedings null and void. Theſe on the other hand, ſupported by the Emperor, the King of France, and ſeveral other Princes, firſt pronounced a ſentence of contumacy againſt Eugenius for refuſing to obey their ſummons, and afterwards they depoſed him from the Pontificate on the 25th of June *A. D.* 1439.

They perſiſting with firmneſs in vigorous meaſures, and deriding the Papal bulls thundered againſt them, thought proper to elect to the See of Rome, Amadeus Duke of Savoy, who aſſumed the title of Felix V.

Hereupon a freſh ſchiſm enſued to the great ſcandal of religion, two Popes and two Councils contending together, each of whom had numerous and powerful partizans.

The Council of Baſil continued to ſit till the year 1443, enacting laws and paſſing decrees, notwithſtanding all the efforts uſed by Eugenius to put a ſtop to their proceedings. The Council of Florence was chiefly employed in negotiations with the Greek Church, in order to unite it to the Latin, which, by promiſes and threatnings, and a variety of intrigue, was at laſt effected, though it proved of ſhort duration. The Grecian Emperor and Patriarch, with a train of Biſhops and Doctors, appeared in perſon, in order to give greater weight to ſuch a ſolemn tranſaction, and as they were at that juncture reduced to great extremity by the Turks, who in fact ſoon thereafter proved victorious, as was already noticed.

The

The conditions of concord and peace which Eugenius preſcribed to the Greeks were theſe, That they ſhould acknowledge that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Son as well as from the Father; that departed ſouls were purified by fire in an intermediate ſtate, before they were admitted into heaven, and to the preſence of God; that unleavened bread might be uſed in the Sacrament of the Supper; and that the Roman Pontif was the ſupreme Judge and Head of the whole Catholic Church.

Theſe articles, and the agreement made, gave great umbrage at Conſtantinople. Every thing, it was ſaid, had been conducted in the council at Florence by chicane and ſtratagem, by bribes, promiſes, or menaces, ſo that the former ſchiſm was renewed, and freſh animoſity kindled.

Eugenius died in February 1447, and was ſucceeded by Thomas Sarzano, Biſhop of Bologna, who is known by the name of Nicholas V.

He was a perſon of profound erudition, of diſtinguiſhed talents, a zealous promoter of the liberal arts and ſciences, and a generous patron of learned men. He was alſo remarkable for a ſpirit of moderation, and diſcovered a love of peace and a mildneſs of manners, which charmed all, and preſaged the return of union and tranquillity. This event happily took place under his Pontificate; the European Princes were ſollicitous to accompliſh it; Felix V. was prevailed on to reſign the Papal-chair, the Council of Baſil re-aſſembled at Lauſenne, and confirmed the deed; at ſame time they paſſed a ſolemn decree, ordaining the Church univerſal, to acknowledge Nicholas as ſole Pontif, and to ſubmit to his authority, whilſt he on the other hand ratified their laws and deciſions.

The corrupt ſtate of Religion was ſo apparent, and the irregularities of the eccleſiaſtical Order were

were ſo flagrant and offenſive, that Councils ſaw it neceſſary to interpoſe their authority; and in theſe illuſtrious aſſemblies, there were ſome, who, with great boldneſs and ſeverity, cenſured the tyranny of the court of Rome, and the degeneracy of Biſhops, Prieſts, and Monks. Declamations of this nature came to be the general topics of the times. Various commotions concerning the affairs of religion were raiſed in ſeveral parts of Europe. The doctrines of Wickliff had overſpread England and Scotland, and greatly alarmed the Pope. They likewiſe made their way into foreign kingdoms, particularly into Bohemia, found a kind reception amongſt conſiderable numbers there, and were embraced by ſome members in the univerſity of Prague, about the year 1408. Of theſe John Huſs, Profeſſor of Divinity, was the moſt famous, a Doctor in high eſteem for purity of doctrine and ſanctity of manners, and of diſtinguiſhed learning and eloquence. He inveighed with vehemence againſt the Pope, Cardinals and Biſhops, the vices of the ſacerdotal Order, and many practices in the Church of Rome, whilſt he endeavoured to withdraw the univerſity of Prague from the juriſdiction of Gregory XII.

He was a man of ſuch influence, as to obtain from King Wenciſlaus a revocation of the privileges of other nations in the Univerſity, in behalf of Bohemia, which was reſtored to three ſuffrages that had been uſurped by the German nation, diſtinguiſhed into *Poles*, *Bavarians*, and *Saxons*, though originally thrown into one diviſion.

The conſequence of this was, that a great many of the latter claſs retired from Prague to Leipſick, where Frederic, Elector of Saxony, founded a Univerſity which ſubſiſts to this day. From hence likewiſe aroſe many enemies who perſecuted John Huſs

Huſs by word and writing, and who were active to inflame accuſations againſt him. Accordingly he was ſummoned to the tribunal of John XXIII. This he diſregarded and made no compearance, upon which he was declared contumacious, and excommunicated. Afterwards, the Council of Conſtance ordered him to appear before them, and to anſwer to the charge of hereſy brought againſt him. In order to ſecure him from all kind of violence, he obtained the grant of a Safe-conduct from the Emperor Sigiſmund. Depending entirely upon this, he readily repaired to Conſtance, and pled his cauſe before the Council with a maſculine and flowing eloquence. But many there, were reſolved upon his deſtruction; they condemned him, his writings and doctrines; and, contrary to all good faith, and to the imperial Paſſ-port, he was in a ſcandalous manner diveſted of his ſacerdotal habit, thrown into priſon, declared an Hereſiarch, delivered over to the ſecular arm, and put into the hands of the Duke of *Bavaria*. Thereupon his books were publicly burnt at the church-door, and he himſelf was committed to the flames upon the 6th of July, *A. D.* 1415.

This eminent perſon paſſed through the tragical ſcene, with heroic reſolution and Chriſtian fortitude, expreſſed the warmeſt ſentiments and feelings of Religion, a confident expectation of a bleſſed immortality, and a high hope that Heaven would not deſert but proſper the cauſe for which he ſuffered.

Jerome of Prague who attended and ſupported John Huſs, his beloved friend and companion, was likewiſe arraigned before the Council, and threatned with the ſame miſerable fate, if he did not inſtantly abjure his opinions. Thrown into a panic at the proſpect of ſuch a cruel death, he ſignified his

his willingneſs to retract and yield ſubmiſſion to the Romiſh Church. Notwithſtanding this, he was remanded to priſon upon a pretext of inſincerity. There he collected his native ſtrength, reſumed courage, and being re-examined by the members of Council, he declared his ſorrow for having done any thing that could even be conſtrued into a recantation, and publicly profeſſed the ſame principles which his martyred friend had done.

Hereupon he was ſentenced to death, led out to execution, tied to a ſtake, and burnt alive, on the 30th of May, *A. D.* 1416; to all which he ſubmitted with patience and magnanimity.

Thus did theſe early Reformers fall victims to the rage of ſuperſtition, the violence of faction, and the revenge of perſonal animoſity; all which contributed to the ruin of thoſe eminent men, who deſerved a better fate, nay, who were well entitled to univerſal eſteem.

Their numerous diſciples were not diſcouraged but rather animated by their death. No ſooner were the news of this heard at Prague, than they flew to their arms, deſtroyed the Archbiſhop's palace, and maſſacred ſeveral perſons who appeared moſt obnoxious. The Nobility of Bohemia and Moravia were exaſperated at the violation of the Public Faith, entered into a league not to receive the canons of that Council which had unjuſtly condemned Huſs and Jerome, and reſolved to defend their memories and doctrines to the utmoſt of their power. A large body of the Huſſites, amounting to 30,000, retreated to a high mountain which they called Tabor, where they built a large and regular city, which they fortified in the ſtrongeſt manner. They choſe for their leader the famous *Ziſka*, a Bohemian Knight, a man of intrepid bravery,

very, under whoſe ſtandard a numerous army was ſoon muſtered.

Upon the death of Wenciſlaus, King of Bohemia, the Emperor Sigiſmund ſucceeded to the throne, who enacted ſevere laws againſt the Huſſites, and employed the force of arms to reduce them, by which many of them ſuffered in a moſt cruel manner. The Bohemians exaſperated at ſuch barbarous proceedings, withdrew their ſubjection in the year 1420, and declared open war againſt their Sovereign. Ziſka their illuſtrious Chief, expert in war, and leading on a zealous and intrepid band, met with ſignal ſucceſs, gained ſeveral victories over the Emperor, made himſelf maſter of Prague, and afterwards of all Bohemia. Upon his death, *Procopius Raza* ſucceeded as General, a man little inferior for ſpirit and valour, and who carried on the war to great advantage. In the courſe of it, the moſt inhuman barbarities were committed on both ſides; depredation, carnage and blood marked the progreſs of the contending armies. They were mutually inflamed againſt one another to a ſavage degree; both held it as a maxim, that it was lawful to expirpate Heretics by fire and ſword, and each appeared to the other in this unfortunate point of light. It is not difficult to deſcry the ravage and calamity which ſuch a pernicious principle would ſpread, heightned by all the motives of revenge, ſuperſtition or conſcience.

As the Huſſites greatly increaſed in numbers, ſo their union diminiſhed. Miſunderſtanding ſprang up amongſt themſelves which divided them into two factions, known by the diſtinction of Calixtines and Taborites. The firſt were more moderate in their demands, ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on the uſe of the cup or chalice in the Lord's Supper, which they

they ſaid ought to be adminiſtred in both kinds; required that the Word of God ſhould be preached in a plain, intelligible manner; that the Eccleſiaſtical Orders ſhould be brought to greater regularity, and reſtrained in their worldly purſuits and poſſeſſions; and that the puniſhment of crimes ſhould be left to the Civil Magiſtrate.

The Taborites aimed at higher things, and wanted to reduce every thing in Religion to the ſtandard of primitive ſimplicity. They demanded an abolition of Papal power and authority, that the form of Divine worſhip, and of eccleſiaſtical government ſhould be changed, that ſuperſtitious rites and ceremonies ſhould be condemned, that an univerſal Reformation ſhould take place, and a new Church and Hierarchy erected on the ruins of the preſent.

Some ran into the wildneſs of fanaticiſm and religious cruelty *, ſpoke of the ſuggeſtion and impulſe of the Spirit as the grand directory, and of the perſonal appearance and preſidence of Chriſt upon earth, for the government of his Church.

The unjuſtifiable errors and actions of theſe laſt mentioned, are imputed by ſome to the whole claſs of Huſſites at large, without making that diſtinction which truth and impartiality require.

The Council of Baſil earneſtly wiſhed and laboured to put an end to a war which had occaſioned ſo much confuſion and bloodſhed. With this view the Bohemians were invited to come

* This may be learned from the—Diarium Huſſiticum—of Byzinius, and of which the following paſſage is a ſpecimen.—In hoc tempore ultionis, quilibet fidelis, etiam Preſbyter, quantumcunque ſpiritualis, eſt maledictus, qui gladium ſuum corporalem prohibet a ſanguine adverſariorum legis Chriſti, ſed debet manus ſuas lavare in eorum ſanguine et ſanctificare.

there, that ſome method of accommodation might, if poſſible, be deviſed. Many of them were averſe to this propoſal, but the Nobles and leading men obtained a ſolemn deputation of three hundred perſons, to whom the Council gave an ample Paſſport. After many conferences and warm debates, theſe returned home without effecting any thing. The Council afterwards ſent ambaſſadors into Bohemia, who entered into ſeparate negotiations with the Nobility, who thereupon were ſuſpected by the people. Matters at laſt came to an open rupture. A deciſive battle was fought between theſe parties, the Calixtines and Taborites were defeated, Procopius was killed, and Sigiſmund was acknowledged King of Bohemia.

After this, a treaty of peace was concluded with the Bohemians and Moravians, to which the Calixtines acceded, on obtaining the privilege of the cup in the Euchariſt. The Emperor made a triumphant entry into Prague in September 1436, and the Romiſh ſervice and ceremonies were reeſtabliſhed in all the Churches.

The Taborites were inflexible; and neither artifice, perſuaſion, nor perſecution could vanquiſh their reſolution, or prevail on them to abandon their principles. Theſe, however, they reviewed with care, and improved to advantage. Lopping off what was wrong, retrenching what appeared redundant or unneceſſary, and weighing every article with leiſure and candour, they new-modelled their religious ſyſtem, and gave it a more conſiſtent and ſcriptural aſpect. They diſcarded from their communion ſuch whoſe tenets or manners were any way licentious or diſgraceful, adhered ſtedfaſtly to the Faith in oppoſition to Popery, being now known by the name of the Bohemian Brethren, but whom their enemies ſometimes ſtiled Picards, or Beghards,

bards, and as a great auxiliary body they afterwards joined Luther and Calvin in the glorious work of the Reformation.

We have already had occaſion to remark, that the excellent art of Printing, ſo conducive to the propagation of knowledge, was found out in this century, and now we would obſerve, that toward the concluſion of it, the new world of America was diſcovered, which opened up an immenſe field for the extenſion of trade and commerce. The uſeful invention of the mariner's needle and compaſs, had been diſcovered in the kingdom of Naples about the year 1330. From that time gradual improvements were made in the art of navigation, ſailing was rendered a great deal ſafer, and more frequent; and diſtant voyages were undertaken. The *Portugueſe*, in particular, had penetrated as far as Ethiopia and the *Indies*, and other nations were advancing in imitation of them. But none proved ſo bold and ſucceſsful an adventurer at ſea as Chriſtopher Columbus, a native of *Genoa*, in the ſervice of Spain. He obſerving, and weighing with attention, what a vaſt diſproportion there muſt be between the land and water which were ſuppoſed to divide the terraqueous globe, concluded with a kind of confidence, that there muſt be another continent beyond the *Atlantic* ocean. The probability of this he repreſented to different courts in Europe, for ſeveral years, who treated it as a romantic project. At laſt he received a commiſſion from the court of Spain, who enabled him to equip three ſhips, and furniſhed him with men, money, and proviſions. He accordingly ſet ſail on the 3d of Auguſt 1492, and arrived ſafe at the Canaries. From thence he proceeded to the weſtward in queſt of this unknown region. Nothing appearing for a long while, his men began to mutiny, and entered into

into a conſpiracy againſt his life. At this criſis of time, he fortunately diſcovered a light from ſhore, and, upon the 17th of October, made the land, which produced reconciliation and joy. He firſt made himſelf maſter of different iſlands, particularly Cuba, Hiſpaniola and Jamaica, and from thence opened an eaſy paſſage into the vaſt continent of America.

How this immenſe region was at firſt peopled, has been the ſubject of much diſpute, and of many curious conjectures. Some have thought it highly probable, that this was done by the antient Carthaginians, who were famous navigators. They themſelves were ſituated on the north-weſt coaſt of Africa, and poſſeſſed the Canary and Cape-Verd iſlands in the Atlantic ocean. From time to time they ſent large colonies to theſe places, their ſhips were of large conſtruction, and ſometimes carried 1000 men. Some of theſe might miſs their paſſage and be driven weſtward, or voluntarily proceed in queſt of new habitations. From theſe, however, they would find it impoſſible to return, on account of the trade-winds, which would always blow contrary to them, and which their infant ſkill could not ſurmount. Thus the Americans would remain unknown. For it is by the aid of the compaſs and other improvements, that a way is found out of ſailing into higher latitudes, out of the courſe of the trade-winds, by which ſhips can now return to the eaſtern continent.

But others think it much more probable, that the natives of America originally came from China, Japan, or ſome part of Tartary. It is aſſerted with great confidence by ſome, that the Chineſe knew the arts of navigation, printing, and the uſe of guns a long time before the Europeans*. Nor is it incredible

* Hornius de Origine Gentium Americanarum. Harris's Travels, in folio, p. 8, 9. 17, 18.

credible that ſuch an ingenious and prolific people ſhould ſend out colonies to repleniſh other parts of the world. At the time of the Spaniſh conqueſt, the *Yncas* of *Peru* did not boaſt of any original beyond 400 years, nor the Mexicans above 300 years.

In Peru, particularly, the ſame taſte in architecture prevails as among the Chineſe, and the inhabitants reſemble them in reſpect of the vaſt extent of their cities, and the magnitude and manner of their towers and fortified places. It is likewiſe related, that about the year 1268, great multitudes of the Chineſe, were, by an invaſion of the Tartars, obliged to leave their country, and that they fled into certain remote iſlands, which, in all probability, lay on the American ſhore.

With regard to Tartary, the moſt ſkilful navigators have not been able to ſail from the north, round the eaſtern coaſts of that country. Nay, ſome have conjectured that a certain neck of land may have ſtretched from thence to America; or that this cannot, at any rate, be very far diſtant from ſome parts of Tartary. And many of the Americans reſemble the Scythians or Tartars in their forms of idolatry, in their manner of living, and of paſturing their cattle.

However, we would now obſerve, that Americus Veſpuſius, a Florentine, was likewiſe employed by Emanuel King of Portugal, to proceed for America, to make diſcoveries and obtain poſſeſſions, which he accordingly did, and called that extenſive region by his own name. Alexander VI. fond of aggrandizing the Roman See, and imitating the lordly example of his aſſuming predeceſſors, who diſpoſed of crowns and kingdoms in Europe, gave a freſh inſtance of Pontifical preſumption, with a ſhew of generoſity, beſtowed what was not his own, and

and divided all America between the Spaniards and the Portugueſe. He exhorted theſe two nations to propagate the goſpel among the Americans, and appointed a great number of Franciſcans and Dominicans to ſettle amongſt them, and to promote their converſion. But they carried the ſpirit, not of Chriſtianity but of Popery with them, were more intent to ſubject the natives to the See of Rome, than to Jeſus Chriſt, and to acquire grandeur and opulence for themſelves, than to forward the ſalvation of ſouls. And what elſe could be expected in America, conſidering the conduct of the Roman Clergy in Europe, and the characters of that ſuperſtition which they taught, in the room of real religion? Beſides, the Dominicans and Franciſcans were, in a particular manner, chargeable with great irregularities, both in doctrine and practice; and indeed the whole eccleſiaſtical Order were at this time ſunk into deep and mournful degeneracy, utterly inconſiſtent with their ſacred profeſſion.

PART

PART IV.

WE now arrive at that grand period of the Chriſtian Church, which I fixed at the glorious æra of the Reformation, about the beginning of the ſixteenth century.

This opens to our view a ſpacious and fertile field ſtored with rich materials, where the greateſt difficulty will be, to ſelect with judgment, and to abridge with propriety.

Notwithſtanding the power and prevalence of Popery during many preceeding ages of the Church, notwithſtanding the ignorance and ſuperſtition which had hitherto generally reigned, yet there were, even amidſt the darkeſt times, ſome men of brighter parts and of more eminent piety, who often appeared, if not to ſtem the torrent of deluſion, yet to diffuſe ſome glimmerings of light, who groaned under the oppreſſions, and lamented the errors of the Church of Rome, and who entertained juſter notions of religion.

Beſides many who may not have come to our knowledge, beſides the long liſt of faithful witneſſes who bore teſtimony to the truth, particularly recorded by ſome authors †, we may recollect thoſe whom

† Flaccius Illyricus, Uſher, Spanheim, and others.

whom we have tranſiently mentioned, the Waldenſes and Albigenſes, the Wicklifites, the Huſſites and Bohemian brethren, who lifted up a ſtandard againſt Antichriſt. Nay, even in the boſom of the Church there were not a few private perſons who loudly complained; and many powerful Princes and States remonſtrated againſt the arrogance, the lordly dominion and tyranny of the Pontifs, the wealth, indolence, and wickedneſs of the Clergy, who regretted the corruption of religion, and wiſhed earneſtly for ſome reformation. Pope Adrian himſelf acknowledged the neceſſity of this, and ſeveral councils were conveened under ſome ſpecious but eluſory pretexts of this nature, whilſt nothing eſſential was effected.

This glorious work was reſerved for Martin Luther, whom Providence raiſed up in a remarkable manner, in the year 1517, as an eminent inſtrument, in conjunction with other cotemporary reformers, to bring about one of the moſt ſignal and intereſting revolutions in human hiſtory. The noble and pious enterprize was proſpered by Heaven, notwithſtanding very formidable oppoſition. The great champions who led the way, were inſpired with a moſt ardent zeal for religion, and an invincible force and intrepidity of mind, equal to the arduous undertaking. The ſeeds of reformation had been formerly ſown, which now ſprang up to advantage and maturity. The revival of learning, a taſte for the liberal arts and ſciences after a long and diſmal night of darkneſs, and a ſpirit of inveſtigation opened the eyes of mankind, and enabled them to diſcern more clearly, and to judge with greater accuracy. The ſacred books were now happily ſpread through moſt of the ſtates and countries in Europe, tranſlated into the vernacular language of each nation, particularly in Italy, Germany,

ny, France and Britain. The Roman Pontifs had riſen to a dangerous ſummit of power and dominion, and the Romiſh religion to an enormous height of ſuperſtition. The eccleſiaſtical Orders wallowed in wealth, luxury, idleneſs and vice. Their ſhare of property and over-grown opulence are almoſt incredible, and without ſome effectual check, they bade fair to have engroſſed in proceſs of time all the power and riches of the world. Univerſal monarchy is a formidable monſter. But an univerſal empire of Popery, uniting both ſpirituals and temporals into one ſupreme head, would have been a general calamity, a tremendous evil, pregnant with every miſchief, and fatal to the civil and religious intereſts of mankind. Some ideas of the balance of power may have ſtruck States and Princes at that time, which now poiſes and regulates all the kingdoms of Europe, and is ſo grand an object of political attention. Money and property conſtitute the ſtrength and ſinews of a nation. Rank, precedency, dominion and authority follow in a natural train. All theſe were in a manner monopolized by the Church of Rome. Her Pontifs, Cardinals, Patriarchs, Archbiſhops, Biſhops, and Abbots, were like ſo many ſovereign princes. Many Eccleſiaſtics were employed in the higheſt offices and negotiations of State. Inferior Orders poſſeſſed proportionable wealth, and innumerable ſtratagems or arguments were deviſed to increaſe it, fetched from this world or from another. Convents, monaſtries and nunneries drained the riches of many countries, and what was thus ſwallowed up, reverted not again to circulate in trade and commerce, but only ſerved to pamper and aggrandize a ſeparate body of men, disjoined from the reſt of the world, by an unnatural ſubjection to celibacy. Even in Scotland, the riches and privileges of the

Clergy were exorbitant. David I. from his exceſſive ſuperſtition and liberality, transferred into their hands moſt of the crown-lands, which were of vaſt extent. * They were in uſe to pay no leſs than the one half of the land-tax, from which it may be reaſonably inferred, that the half of national territory appertained to them. From the earlieſt times of the Scotiſh monarchy to the death of Cardinal Beatoun in the year 1546, 54 perſons had held the high office of Lord Chancellor, of which number 43 had been Eccleſiaſtics. The Lords of Seſſion in Scotland conſtitute the ſupreme Court in civil cauſes, of which the one half, beſides the Preſident, were made up of church-men; and their ſeat and influence in Parliament are well known.

In England, the wealth of the Roman Catholic Clergy appears to have been little inferior. When a ſurvey was made by William the Conqueror, of all the land in England, the whole amounted to 60,215 Knight's fees; of which the Church then poſſeſſed 28,015. To this, large additions were afterwards made, till the time of Edward I. who enacted the ſtatute of Mortmain, by which it is declared illegal to give any eſtate to the Church without the King's expreſs leave.

When Henry VIII. diſſolved about 1000 convents, monaſtries, and abbeys, the annual revenue of theſe alone was found to amount to L. 2,653000, a great part of which went to Rome, as the Governors and Governeſſes of many of theſe religious houſes were foreigners and reſided in Italy.

Among ſo many nations and ſuch multitudes of people who embraced the Reformation, ſome ſecular conſiderations might, no doubt, operate in part, and they were juſtly intitled to a certain degree of attention, in ſubordination to religion. But if either

* Dr Robertſon's Hiſt. of Scotland, vol. I. p. 121. and 123.

ther too great regard was paid to them, or if in any inſtance the Reformation was promoted by wrong methods, or from ſiniſter views,—be this to the parties or perſons alone; nor can this ſerve to invalidate or condemn the Reformation itſelf, no more than ought the corruptions of Popery to be imputed to Chriſtianity. The cauſe which the reformers eſpouſed was evidently good, noble, and glorious, which aſſerted the rights of conſcience, and the genuine truth of goſpel-revelation, in oppoſition to the moſt violent encroachments, and to the groſſeſt adulteration. Its grand deſign was to abandon a Church that would not be reformed, which was deeply depraved in doctrine and diſcipline, worſhip and government, which was overrun with ſuperſtition, and converted into a ſyſtem of civil and religious tyranny, which had ſpread its deluſions far and wide through the world, and triumphed for ages together over mankind in the moſt lawleſs manner. It was to ſtand up in behalf of God and Chriſtianity, of intereſts the moſt ſacred and eſſential to men, to ſhake off the ſhackles of human authority in the important matters of religion, and to reduce every thing relative to it, to the infallible ſtandard of Holy Scripture. Theſe were the worthy principles and views which animated the illuſtrious band of reformers, which made many of them undergo poverty, diſgrace, baniſhment, long and ſevere trials, and even reſiſt unto blood. In many various lights the bleſſed Reformation from Popery muſt appear to be well warranted, and may be fully defended upon principles of reaſon and religion, of liberty and policy.

Luther, in particular, was actuated by great and religious conſiderations, to ſtand forth as a brazen bulwark againſt Papal impoſitions. It was the force of truth which made him raiſe his voice and draw his

his pen, that inſpired him with ardour and intrepidity, and not any ignoble motives of avarice or reſentment *. And a man of his diſtinguiſhed abilities bid fair to have riſen high in the Church of Rome, had his conſcience permitted him to continue in it.

Martin Luther was born at *Aiſleben*, a town in Saxony, on the 10th of November 1483. He ſpent ſome time in the ſtudy of law, but afterwards became a Monk of the Auguſtine Order. He was ordained Prieſt in the year 1507, and was ſent to Rome the following year by the convents, that had fallen into ſome conteſt with their General, which difference was accommodated under his direction. Upon his return, he was made Profeſſor of Divinity in the academy at Wittemberg, where he taught both theology and philoſophy with the higheſt reputation. He was a man of a towering genius and extenſive learning, poſſeſſing a ſolid underſtanding and a tenacious memory, ſingular for patience, application, and a certain magnanimity of ſoul, which roſe ſuperior to danger and difficulty.

Theſe great qualities were brought forth to light and ſhone with uncommon advantage, by his vigorous oppoſition to Papal power and impoſition. Leo X. the reigning Pontif, had, by his largeſſes and magnificence, drained his coffers; and, in order to ſupply them, he was adviſed to raiſe money by ſelling indulgences. Theſe, which undertook to abſolve both the living and the dead, and to remit

† Some Romiſh hiſtorians, as alſo Mr *Hume*, in his Hiſtory of the reign of Henry VIII. throw a ſlur on Luther's character, by aſcribing his conduct to mean motives, contrary to fact, the moſt authentic hiſtories, and a variety of ſtriking circumſtances which evidently clear him. For full ſatisfaction, I refer the Reader to the judicious remarks made by Dr Maclain, in his Tranſlation of Dr Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. III. p. 304, the octavo Edition.

mit ſins paſt, preſent and future, at certain fixed prices, were ſent all over Europe in a ſcandalous manner. John Tetzel, a Dominican, was employed to publiſh and diſpoſe of them in Germany.

This audacious agent executed his commiſſion in the moſt inſolent and fraudulent manner. He boaſted of the efficacy of the indulgences which he granted, as ſufficient to expiate for the moſt enormous crimes, and with groſs impiety derogated from the merits of Jeſus Chriſt. Theſe flagrant abuſes raiſed the indignation of our famous Reformer. Luther could not behold, in ſilence, ſuch a ſhameful traffic carried on to the infinite diſgrace of his religion, and the deluſion of his fellow Chriſtians. Under this conviction, he was led to examine not only the nature and tendency of the indulgences, but alſo the authority by which they were publiſhed. The diſcovery of one error prompted him to purſue his enquiry, and conducted him to the detection of more. At laſt, after mature deliberation, he publiſhed 95 Theſes againſt the Church of Rome upon the 30th of September 1517.

John Tetzel was appointed to anſwer them, and others joined him in the controverſy, in which they diſplayed more vehemence than argument. Luther replied with great ſuperiority of reaſon and learning, and, in the courſe of this debate, brought to light many monſtrous errors and abuſes; expoſed the frauds and licentious lives of the Monks and Prieſts, and attacked the authority, the ſuperſtition and tyranny of the Church of Rome. He publicly declared the integrity of his intentions, at ſame time, in order to ſecure the countenance and aid of temporal Princes, he took care to explain the nature and extent of civil power, ſo viſibly encroached upon by Papal uſurpation.

Many

Many Divines, ſome Cardinals, and George Duke of Saxony, ſtruck with the juſtice of his cauſe, and the force of argument and eloquence with which he defended it, favoured him. It is reported, that the Emperor himſelf ſaid, that Luther ought to be protected as he might be highly uſeful. Leo X. was not at firſt much moved with the matter; but being informed by Maximilian I. that it was an affair of great importance, he ſummoned Luther to appear at Rome, and there to give an account of his doctrine and conduct.

Frederic the Wiſe, Elector of Saxony, inſiſted that the cauſe of Luther came within the cognizance of a German tribunal. The Roman Pontif yielded to this repreſentation, and ordered him to plead his cauſe before Cardinal Cajetan, at the diet of Augſburgh. This imperious legate was himſelf a Dominican, an avowed enemy to Luther, and a zealous friend of Tetzel, from whom therefore no accommodation could be expected.

The event of things confirmed this ſuſpicion. The Saxon Reformer repaired to Augſburgh, and held ſeveral conferences with Cajetan, who behaved in the moſt domineering manner, adducing authority alone inſtead of argument. Whereupon Luther returned to Wittemberg, having firſt appealed to the Pope, and afterwards to a general Council. Leo X. with great indiſcretion, let looſe the reins to Papal deſpotiſm, and publiſhed an edict, in which, with boundleſs effrontery, he aſſerted a Pontifical power to deliver from all the puniſhments due to tranſgreſſions of every kind. This ſtill further confirmed Luther in his oppoſition to a Church which could vent ſuch impious doctrine. The Pope, however, employed others of a mild and moderate turn, in order to ſoothe a little, and to bring about ſome ſort of reconciliation. But Luther, having choſen

choſen his ground with judgment and deliberation, remained firm and inflexible. Thereupon Leo, urged on by zealous, but imprudent counſellors, iſſued out a bull of excommunication againſt him, in the month of June 1520, condemned him as guilty of Hereſy, and ordered his writings to be publicly burnt. Luther now ſaw that it was full time to concert effectual meaſures for his own defence, and for the ſucceſs of his cauſe. In order therefore to ſhew the world that he was now to ſeparate from the communion of the Romiſh Church, which was become deeply degenerate, and to convince them of that ſpirit of intrepidity with which he was reſolved to act, he erected a large pile of wood without the walls of the city of Wittemberg, on the 10th of December 1520, and in preſence of a vaſt concourſe of people, committed to the flames the bull that had been publiſhed againſt him, as alſo the decretals and edicts which aſſerted the Papal ſupremacy. Hereupon a ſecond anathema was thundered out againſt our Reformer, at which, however, he was no wiſe diſmayed. Inſtead of this, he proſecuted his plan of Reformation with greater fervour, applied himſelf to the moſt aſſiduous ſearch after truth, and, with a bold hand, laid open the errors of the Romiſh Church, and the tyranny of her Pontifs. In this important work, he was joined by Philip Melancton, Profeſſor at Wittemberg, Andrew Caroldſtad Arch-deacon of that city, *Bucer* of Straſburgh, and by many other pious and learned men in various parts of Europe. Among theſe, Eraſmus Roterodamus holds a principal place, who warmly eſpouſed the cauſe of religion and liberty, and by his writings endeavoured to clear away the ruſt and rubbiſh of former ages, and to ſubſtitute ſolid learning and more accurate reaſoning. Vaſt numbers of people of every rank, forſook the tenets

nets and uſages of Popery, in which they had been long detained, and welcomed with ardour the dawning of that light which now began to break in upon them.

Rome was not a little alarmed at the proſpect, and uſed various methods to obſtruct the progreſs of the Reformers. Upon the death of Maximilian I. his grandſon, Charles V. King of Spain, ſucceeded to the Empire *A. D.* 1519. Leo X. applied with great earneſtneſs to the new Emperor, to engage him to act with vigour againſt Luther and all his adherents. But he was ſenſible of his great obligations to Frederick the Wiſe, in raiſing him to the imperial throne, in oppoſition to his competitor Francis I. King of France. By the perſuaſion therefore of the Elector of Saxony, he refuſed to inflict any puniſhment on Luther, but agreed to have his cauſe fairly tried before a diet to be aſſembled at Worms. Theſe diets were like ſo many provincial councils, which judged not only in political but eccleſiaſtical cauſes, and in which Prelates and Abbots ſat and voted, along with the Princes of the Empire. Luther was furniſhed with a ſafe-conduct from the Emperor; in conſequence of which he appeared* at the diet on the 17th of April 1521, and in that grand aſſembly pleaded his cauſe with a firmneſs of mind, a ſtrength of argument, and ſplendor of eloquence, which charmed if they did not perſuade. Mere authority, menaces or promiſes, and ſubtile evaſions were only oppoſed to all that dignity of truth and candour of conduct which the Saxon Reformer that day diſplayed in ſo eminent a manner. He was nobly obſtinate in a good cauſe, and that was ſufficient Hereſy. He was

* When Luther's friends tried to diſuade him from venturing himſelf at Worms, he ſaid, That if he had to encounter as many devils as there were tiles upon the houſes of that city, he would go, and truſt Providence.

was thereupon condemned by an unanimous voice, and declared an enemy to the holy Roman Empire. Frederick his friend, fearful of conſequences, took care to conduct him, upon his return, to the caſtle of Wartenburg, where he lay concealed for ten months. This place he called his Patmos, and there he employed his leiſure hours in compoſing various works, which he afterwards publiſhed to the world, and which were of ſignal ſervice in promoting the Reformation, along with his German tranſlation of the Holy Scriptures.

Adrian VI. ſucceeded Leo in the Pontificate, who ſent a legate to the diet aſſembled at Nuremberg *A. D.* 1522, to demand an immediate execution of the ſentence that had been paſſed againſt Luther and his followers. At ſame time he was authorized to declare the Pontif's readineſs to rectify grievances and abuſes. This encouraged the German Princes to require that a general Council ſhould be conveened, and to delay the conſideration of religious matters till that was done. They alſo exhibited a heavy charge againſt the court of Rome, for many repeated injuries which had been offered to the German nation.

Upon the death of Frederick, John his brother, ſucceeded as Elector of Saxony. This great Prince acted with more vigour and reſolution, at once ſhook off all ſubjection to the See of Rome, aſſumed the ſupreme eccleſiaſtical power within his own dominions, and therein founded a new independent Church upon the principles of the Reformers. In order to give form and ſtability to this infant eſtabliſhment, he employed Luther and Melancthon to draw up a body of laws, regulating worſhip, government and diſcipline; and, in the year 1527, he appointed heralds to make publication of theſe throughout all his dominions. At ſame time he

ſupplied the churches with learned and pious Paſtors, and watched over the doctrine and morals of the Clergy with an attentive eye. Several other States and Princes in Germany followed the noble example that was ſet them, and, renouncing Papal juriſdiction, reſolutely introduced by their own authority, the ſame regulations in religion which the Elector of Saxony had done. Thus a twofold and open rupture was formed, one with the Church of Rome, another in the Germanic body itſelf; as one part embraced the Reformation, whilſt another ſtill adhered to Papal ſuperſtition.

In this critical ſituation of affairs, a diet was aſſembled at *Spire*, in the year 1526, whilſt the Roman Catholics intimated deſigns of making war upon the Reformers, and they, on the other hand, were meditating plans of confederacy for their mutual defence, and for the ſecurity of their cauſe. When the diet was opened, in which Ferdinand, the Emperor's brother preſided, propoſals were made by the Imperial Ambaſſadors, to ſuppreſs all farther diſputes about religion, and, in the mean time, to execute the ſentence denounced againſt Luther and his adherents at Worms. This motion was warmly oppoſed by a great majority of the German Princes. They ſtrenuouſly inſiſted that a general Council ſhould be firſt aſſembled, who were inveſted with the proper right of judging and deciding in theſe matters. They therefore agreed to addreſs the Emperor, and to requeſt his ſummoning a free œcumenical Council, and determined, that, in the mean time, the different Princes and States of the empire ſhould be at liberty, to regulate the affairs of religion within their reſpective provinces, as they themſelves ſhould judge expedient.

Nothing could be more humiliating to the Church of Rome, or more favourable for the cauſe of the Refor-

Reformation than this determination of the diet. It encouraged vaſt numbers to think and act with greater freedom than ever, and to ſhake off the Papal yoke in which they had been formerly fettered. It afforded a noble opportunity to the Reformers, which they improved with ſingular induſtry, to propagate their opinions, and to digeſt their plans. It inſpired them with freſh ardour and reſolution, and gave a kind of ſanction and conſiſtency to the glorious cauſe in which they were engaged. At this time too, they were unmoleſted by Charles V. the troubled ſtate of whoſe dominions in Italy, France, and Spain, prevented him from attending to the civil affairs of Germany, and ſtill leſs to matters of religion. Beſides, very fortunately for the Reformers, he was highly exaſperated againſt the Roman Pontif, Clement VII. For he had entered into an alliance with the French and Venetians againſt the Emperor, from a jealouſy of his power in Italy, after the victory he had obtained over Francis I. at the battle of Pavia. Nay, in the heat of reſentment Charles carried matters ſo far, as to aboliſh Papal juriſdiction in his Spaniſh dominions, to make war upon his Holineſs in Italy, to block him up in the caſtle of St Angelo, and to lay ſiege to Rome *A. D.* 1527.

At laſt, however, he concluded a treaty with Clement VII. and ſummoned a new diet at Spire in the year 1529. Then the ſcene was reverſed. By a majority of votes now obtained, the unanimous deciſion of the former diet was revoked, and it was declared unlawful to make any innovation whatever in religion, until a Council was conveened and gave forth its decrees. It was eaſy to foreſee that this would be poſtponed or eluded by the Pontif and all his adherents, conſidering the critical ſituation of affairs. The deciſion of this diet appeared

appeared to many members, contrary to the good faith of the former one, and extremely iniquitous in the eyes of thoſe who ſaw the neceſſity of an immediate Reformation. Theſe therefore argued and remonſtrated in the warmeſt manner againſt ſuch unjuſt proceedings. But when they found that all their prudent and pious attempts of this nature were ineffectual, then the Princes of the empire who were well affected to the cauſe of true religion, particularly, John, Elector of Saxony, George, Elector of Brandenburgh, Erneſt and Francis, Dukes of Lunenburg, the Landgrave of Heſſe, and Prince of Anhalt, entered a ſolemn proteſt againſt the deciſions of the diet. To this, 14 imperial cities acceded; and it is from this famous Proteſtation that the denomination of *Proteſtants* is given to the Reformers.

The German Princes, who had diſſented on this memorable occaſion, deputed proper perſons to wait on the Emperor, and to inform him of what they had done. Theſe executed their commiſſion with a firmneſs and ſpirit, expreſſive of that magnanimity which inſpired the illuſtrious perſonages whom they repreſented. Charles V. thought himſelf ſlighted, and his deſigns counteracted by the ſteps that had been taken in his abſence, and commanded the ambaſſadors to be put under an arreſt. The news of this violent procedure alarmed the Proteſtant Princes; and they now perceived that their perſonal ſecurity, as well as the ſucceſs of their cauſe, depended upon mutual friendſhip and confederacy among themſelves. With this view ſeveral meetings were held, but, for ſome time, without effect, on account of the various views, and diſagreeing opinions which prevailed. Another incident which ſerved to poſtpone that union which preſent circumſtances demanded, aroſe from

a

a controverſy between the Divines of Saxony and Switzerland, concerning the manner of Chriſt's preſence in the ſacrament. Luther, yet unfettered from ſome prejudices in which he had been educated, taught the doctrine of Conſubſtantiation, as it has been termed by ſome; allowed that our Saviour was preſent in the Euchariſt after an extraordinary manner, and whilſt he condemned the Popiſh tenet of Tranſubſtantiation, thought that communicants might be ſaid to partake of the real body and blood of Chriſt.

Zuinglius, the great Swiſs Reformer, maintained that the bread and wine were no more than external emblems or ſymbols, intended to call up to our thoughts a more lively remembrance of Chriſt's death.

In order to terminate this unſeaſonable diſpute, a conference was held at Marpurg in the year 1529, which continued for four days. The Doctors of each party could not, however, convince the other, but at laſt they all agreed upon a ſort of truce, granting a mutual toleration of ſentiments upon this article, that they might unite againſt the common enemy, and for the ſupport of a more eſſential cauſe.

The Proteſtant Miniſters had formed a deſign of ſending a ſolemn embaſſy to the Emperor, when an account came that he himſelf was reſolved to attend in perſon the approaching diet at Augſburg. In his progreſs thither he had an interview with Clement VII. at Bologna, when, in the moſt urgent manner, he preſſed him to ſummon a general Council. This, however, the political Pontif declined with great obſtinacy; nay, he taxed the Emperor with an exceſs of lenity, and exhorted him as a faithful ſon of the Church, to extirpate by force the whole body of Heretics. Charles V. judged

ſuch

ſuch meaſures too violent and precipitant, and thought it much more adviſeable to proceed with caution and deliberation in a matter of ſuch general moment.

In mean while, Luther, Melancthon, and other eminent Doctors, drew up, by orders of the Elector of Saxony, the capital articles of their religious ſyſtem, and pointed out in what reſpects they differed from the Church of Rome. This was executed with ſingular judgment, elegance and perſpicuity, and is known by the name of the Augſburgh Confeſſion. The diet was opened there upon the 20th of June 1530, and by ſpecial permiſſion, that famous Confeſſion was read by the Chancellor of Saxony, in preſence of the Emperor and all the aſſembled Princes. It was heard with univerſal attention, and ſtamped a deep impreſſion upon the minds of the members. Many ſeemed ſurprized as if a new light had darted into them, others were confirmed in their principles of Reformation, and were not a little delighted to ſee them held forth to view with ſo much accuracy, and with an eloquent ſimplicity.

The Confeſſion of Augſburgh was publiſhed to the world, and a copy of it delivered into the hands of the Emperor, ſubſcribed by the Proteſtant Princes and cities.

There was alſo preſented to this auguſt Aſſembly a remonſtrance of the ſame nature, from the cities of Straſburg, Conſtance, Memingen, and Lindaw, who had adopted the opinion of Zuinglius in relation to the preſence of Chriſt in the Euchariſt, and which was drawn up by Martin Bucer in a very maſterly manner.

The Roman Pontif employed ſome Divines to refute the Proteſtant opinions, all whoſe arguments were weak and unſatisfactory; and when a copy of the pretended anſwers was required, this the Emperor

peror refuſed to grant, with a partiality unbecoming a Prince. This, however, was at laſt obtained, when learned replies by Melancthon and others were publiſhed to the world.

Various ſchemes of accommodation were propoſed in order to bring theſe religious differences to a concluſion. A mutual toleration was talked of; but this ill ſuited the temper of the times. As a contraſt to this, force of arms was judged by ſome to be the only expedient; but this was cruel and might prove hazardous. Conceſſions on both ſides, and a friendly compromiſe could not be expected, conſidering the heat of party, and the wide difference in many moſt important articles between the Proteſtants and Catholics. It was reſolved, however, to make a farther experiment by way of conference. Accordingly ſome eminent perſons of both ſides had frequent meetings, and many attempts were made to prevent matters from coming to extremity. But the unyielding arrogance and ſuperſtition of the Roman See, and the religious reſolution and firmneſs of the Reformers, rendered all reconciliation impracticable. At laſt, the diet iſſued a ſevere decree on the 19th of November, during the abſence of the Saxon and Heſſian Princes, extolling the excellence of the Popiſh religion, cenſuring the innovations that had been introduced, and requiring the Princes, provinces and cities that had withdrawn from the juriſdiction of Rome, to return immediately to a dutiful allegiance, on pain of incurring the vengeance of the Emperor. He, in the mean time, agreed with the Catholic Princes, that they ſhould ſupport, even by force, the execution of this edict.

When the confederate Princes came to conſider the unfavourable aſpect of affairs, they aſſembled firſt at Frankfort, and afterwards at Smalcald, and entered

entered into a ſolemn mutual alliance for the defence of their religion and liberties. They alſo invited into this confederacy the Kings of England, France, and Denmark, as likewiſe other ſtates in Europe. Theſe preparations made no ſmall impreſſion on the Emperor; beſides, he was extremely ſollicitous at that time to obtain ſuccours againſt the *Turk*, and to get his brother Ferdinand's election as King of the Romans acknowledged by all the German Princes. He therefore was far from being averſe to the project of a peace. After many negotiations this was concluded at Nuremberg in the year 1532, between Charles V. and the Proteſtant confederates. The conditions of the treaty were, That the latter ſhould furniſh ſubſidies for waging war with the Ottoman Porte, and ſhould recognize Ferdinand as lawful King of the Romans. On the other hand, the Emperor bound himſelf to abrogate the edicts of Worms and Augſburg, and the Lutherans were allowed to enjoy without diſturbance the free exerciſe of their religion, until a rule of faith was fixed in a general Council.

This agreement gave general ſatisfaction to the Proteſtants, favoured the cauſe which they had eſpouſed, and emboldened many cities and provinces, who had not declared themſelves, to embrace the Reformation, and to ſupport it with vigour. Charles V. applied again to the Roman Pontif requeſting him to call a general Council. But this, Clement VII. artfully evaded for a variety of reaſons. His ſucceſſor Paul III. ſhewed ſome greater inclination to comply with the Emperor's demand, and went ſo far as to ſend circular letters for conveening a Council at Mantua. But the Proteſtants declared they could not ſubmit to an Italian Council, where every thing would be conducted

conducted by the votaries of Rome: They aſſembled in a body at *Smalcald* in the year 1537, and there entered a ſolemn proteſt againſt it.

This, with other circumſtances, prevented the intended meeting of Council, whilſt various meaſures were tried for the re-eſtabliſhment of peace and union. But theſe were diſconcerted by the intrigues of Rome, whoſe agents were ſecretly at work to blow the flame, and to perplex all counſels or contrivances that did not favour Papal ambition.

The Emperor, regardleſs of the Roman Pontif, did by his own authority appoint conferences to be held at Worms and Ratiſbon, where Melancthon diſplayed a viſible ſuperiority of argument and elocution. But nothing definitive was brought to a bearing, both parties ſtuck to their reſpective principles and pretenſions, and all things apparently tended to an open rupture.

Paul III. intimated a reſolution of conveening a Council at Trent, and, with conſent of the Emperor, iſſued out mandates for that purpoſe; but a convocation at that place, and ſummoned by the ſole authority of the Roman Pontif, the Proteſtants would not agree to, for reaſons which entirely ſatisfied themſelves and the impartial world. Hereupon Charles V. departing from thoſe maxims of moderation he had hitherto adopted, and borne along by the ſubtile perſuaſions of the artful Pontif, and promiſes of powerful aſſiſtance from him, eſpouſed ſanguinary ſchemes, and formed a reſolution of terminating matters by force of arms.

The Proteſtant Princes, apprized of theſe deſigns, thought it prudent to provide for their own ſafety, and raiſed an army for the defence of religion and liberty. At this important juncture of time, Luther, whoſe fame is juſtly celebrated through all the

reformed Churches, died in peace, upon the 18th of February, *A. D.* 1546, at Ayſleben his native city.

The ſame year the Council of Trent was conveened, againſt whoſe authority, the confederate Princes aſſembled in the Diet of Ratiſbon, proteſted in the ſtrongeſt manner. In conſequence of this, they were all proſcribed by the Emperor, and he, unfortunately miſled by the artifices of Rome, raiſed a powerful army againſt them. The Elector of Saxony and Landgrave of Heſſe, led their troops into Bavaria, and, with great bravery, cannonaded the Emperor's camp at Ingolſtad. A general action between the two armies was expected to enſue, and many imagined that this would have been favourable for the Proteſtant party. But various cauſes contributed to prevent a battle, however ardently this was deſired. France had failed in furniſhing the ſtipulated ſubſidy; ſome jealouſies aroſe among the confederate Princes through the intrigues of the Emperor; and Maurice Duke of Saxony proved perfidious, who, prompted by ambition, and won over by promiſes, baſely invaded the electoral dominions of his own uncle, whilſt he was gallantly defending the intereſts of Religion and Liberty.

Theſe conſiderations determined the Elector of Saxony to direct his courſe homeward. The Emperor by forced marches overtook him at Muhlberg, where a bloody battle was fought on the 24th of April 1547. Victory declared on the ſide of the Emperor, who defeated the Elector's army which was much inferior in numbers, and made himſelf priſoner. Philip, Landgrave of Heſſe, was prevailed on by the perſuaſions of Maurice his ſon-in-law, to throw himſelf upon the mercy of Charles V. who promiſed to receive him into favour

vour and reſtore him to liberty. Nevertheleſs he was detained priſoner, contrary to the moſt ſolemn engagement, amidſt frivolous pretexts and evaſions unworthy of a Prince.

This event ſeemed to portend deſtruction to the Proteſtant cauſe. In the Diet which ſoon after met at Augſburg, the Emperor required the Proteſtants to leave all religious matters to the deciſion of the Council at Trent, to which Maurice, now declared Elector of Saxony gave conſent, as did alſo a majority of members. The plague breaking out in *Trent* obliged the aſſembled Fathers to retire to Bologna, which was conſtrued into a diſſolution of the Council, and the Pope was utterly averſe from calling another. This ſuggeſted to Charles V. the project of appointing a Formula to be drawn up, that might ſerve as a rule of Faith till a regular Council was ſummoned, which was accordingly done in an ambiguous manner, and framed ſo artfully, as to contain all the eſſential doctrines of the Romiſh Church, and which, as a temporary expedient only, was called The Interim.

It received the Sanction of the Diet at Augſburg, but was acceptable to neither party. Thoſe who refuſed to ſubmit to it were reduced by force of arms, and the colourings and explanations made uſe of to palliate matters, produced much miſunderſtanding, and proved the unfortunate occaſion of bloodſhed and of many calamities.

Maurice, Elector of Saxony, appeared to obſerve a kind of neutrality, neither declaring for nor againſt thoſe who varied in their conduct with reſpect to the Interim. But in the year 1548, he thought proper to aſſemble the Saxon Nobility and Clergy at Leipſic, to conſider what ſteps were to be taken in the preſent critical ſituation of affairs. Melancthon who was deſervedly held in high eſtimation

mation among them, apprehenſive of the Emperor's reſentment on the one hand, and on the other, leaning to moderate meaſures which were peculiarly agreeable to his own mild and pacific diſpoſition, propoſed a ſort of reconciling overture. He gave it as his opinion, that the Interim could by no means be wholly adopted by the Reformers, but that its authority might be acknowledged in matters of an indifferent nature and not eſſential in Religion. This was ſo far from giving general ſatisfaction, that it proved a ſource of ſchiſm and diviſion, and afforded to the Church of Rome an advantage, which if dextrouſly improved, might have been highly detrimental, if not fatal to the Proteſtant cauſe.

Julius III. ſucceeding Paul III. in the Pontificate, agreed to conveen a Council at Trent, and to this the Diet at Augſburg conſented, which was powerfully ſupported by the preſence of an imperial army.

Maurice began to be deſirous of regaining the confidence of the Proteſtant party which he had formerly forfeited, and agreed to the meeting of a general Council at Trent upon certain conditions which he calculated would be favourable to them. He inſiſted particularly that the deciſions of the preceeding Council ſhould be re-examined, that the Proteſtant Divines ſhould have the privilege of ſitting and votting in the New Council, and that the Pope ſhould not preſide in it. Accordingly, the Saxon and other Divines, with Melancthon at their head, ſet forward on their journey, but proceeded no farther than Nuremberg by ſpecial orders from Maurice, who now had formed a project of diſconcerting all the Emperor's ſchemes, which at laſt he accompliſhed.

Maurice,

Maurice, a penetrating Prince, perceived from a variety of circumſtances, that the grand deſign which Charles V. aimed at, was to encroach upon the liberties of Germany, and by cheriſhing diſcord among its Princes, to enlarge his own power and dominion. The Emperor was indeed deſirous of clipping the wings of Papal ambition, but it was that he might more eaſily ſoar alone and gratify his own aſpiring views. And he puſhed the project of a Council, not from motives of peace or Religion, but from a confident perſuaſion that he would be able to direct all its movements, and to convert them to his own ambitious purpoſes.

Maurice was further particularly piqued at the treatment of his father-in-law, the Landgrave of Heſſe, whoſe liberty, as alſo that of John Frederick Elector of Saxony, had been ſollicited in vain by moſt of the Princes in Europe. He therefore entered into a ſecret alliance with the French King and ſeveral of the German Princes, for ſupporting the rights and privileges of the empire. Inſpired with freſh ardour by this powerful confederacy, he marched a formidable army againſt the Emperor with amazing rapidity, and ſurpriſed him at Inſpruck, in an unguarded poſture, with a few forces attending him unable to make any reſiſtance. Such an unexpected event alarmed and diſpirited Charles to a great degree, ſo that he found himſelf obliged to make a peace on any terms. He thereupon not only promiſed to aſſemble a Diet within ſix months, in which all the cauſes of diſſention and tumult ſhould be removed, but concluded at Paſſau the famous treaty of pacification with the Proteſtants, *A. D.* 1552. This is eſteemed the grand baſis of religious liberty in Germany, and was highly favourable to the cauſe of the Reformation. By it, the Interim was declared null and

and void; the contending parties were to enjoy a free exerciſe of their religion, until a Diet for determining diſputes ſhould be conveened; this religious liberty was even always to continue in caſe an uniformity in doctrine and worſhip was not amicably agreed to in the Diet; any who had ſuffered on account of their being concerned in the war of Smalcald, were to be re-inſtated in their poſſeſſions and privileges; and the imperial chamber at Spire was to be conſtituted of Proteſtants as well as Catholics. Thus did providence ſo order matters, that the very Prince who had almoſt ruined the Proteſtant cauſe ſometime before, did now appear its firmeſt friend, and by his addreſs and valour procured a laſting and ſignal ſecurity to it.

This was further confirmed by that Religious Peace, which was concluded at the Diet of Augſburg, opened by *Ferdinand* King of the Romans, in the year 1555, which happily terminated the diſtreſsful ſcenes of war and diſſention, that had for a long time afflicted Church and State. This ſecured to the Proteſtants the undiſturbed enjoyment of their religious liberties upon a ſtable foundation. They were declared to be exempt from all ſubjection to the Roman Pontif, and from the authority of the Biſhops; they were left at entire freedom to enact laws for themſelves, with reſpect to doctrine, diſcipline, and worſhip; all the inhabitants of Germany were allowed to chuſe their own religion, as conſcience preſcribed; and all who ſhould moleſt or perſecute any perſon for their religious opinions, were declared enemies to the empire, and diſturbers of the public peace *. This was a treaty conſonant to the principles of reaſon and of Chriſtianity, and was an eminent benefit, an

* Jo. Schilten Liber de Religioſa Pace.

an illuſtrious victory obtained by the bleſſed Reformation.

The Proteſtant cauſe flew over Europe, with ſurpriſing rapidity and ſucceſs, and was vigorouſly ſupported. This was a matter of vaſtly higher importance than any that had hitherto ſubſiſted, and able diſputants appeared in the controverſy, who diſplayed a great deal of zeal, learning and eloquence. A ſpirit of enquiry was excited, a freedom of thinking and writing was introduced till now unknown, which mightily contributed to the ſpread of the Reformation, and to the downfal of Papal ſuperſtition.

Ulric Zuingle, a Canon of Zurich, was the great Reformer in Switzerland. He was a man of diſtinguiſhed learning and of ſingular reſolution, and ſo early as the year 1516, perceived ſome rays of truth, exclaimed againſt the errors of popery, and he ſoon after concerted ſchemes of an effectual Reformation. Theſe were crowned with deſirable ſucceſs, ſo that the greateſt number of the Helvetic cantons ſhook off the Papal yoke.

The doctrines of the Reformation penetrated into the Northern kingdoms, and Luther's diſciples met with a moſt favourable reception amongſt them, ſo that Sweden, Denmark and Norway fell off at once from the Church of Rome, and embraced the Proteſtant Faith. Guſtavus Vaſa Eriſcon, deſcended of the ancient Kings of Sweden, did, about the year 1531, conveen an aſſembly of the Clergy, cauſed the confeſſion of Augſburg to be publicly received, and obedience to the See of Rome to be ſolemnly renounced. He afterwards aſſembled the States, and recommended the doctrines of the Reformation with ſuch peculiar piety and wiſdom, that it was unanimouſly reſolved to admit and eſtabliſh them. Guſtavus exerted himſelf

ſelf to bring about this important revolution with a firmneſs and magnanimity becoming a great Prince, and publicly declared, that he would rather reſign his crown, than govern a people ſo puſillanimous and ſimple, as to continue ſlaves to Papal authority, and who would ſubmit to the tyranny of Prieſts and Biſhops, rather than obey the mild and equitable laws of their own Monarch.

The light of the Reformation dawned on Denmark in the year 1521, under Chriſtiern II. His ſucceſſor Frederic aſſembled the States of his kingdom, *A. D.* 1527, who publiſhed an edict, by which all the ſubjects were allowed a freedom either to adhere to the Roman Catholic religion, or to embrace the doctrines of Luther. Hereupon the Proteſtant Clergy exerted themſelves with ſuch ſingular zeal and diligence in their miniſterial functions, as to convert the greateſt part of the Danes from the errors of Popery. Chriſtiern III. had the honour of giving perfection and ſtability to the glorious work of the Reformation in his dominions, and it received a ſolemn ſanction from an Aſſembly of the States at *Odenſee*, *A. D.* 1539.

In theſe northern kingdoms, the authority and revenues of the Romiſh Clergy had riſen to an enormous height. Many of the Biſhops poſſeſſed ſuch territories, towns, caſtles and fortreſſes, as rendered them independent on the Crown, enabled them to excite commotions, raiſe armies, inſult their Sovereign, and endanger the State. They lived in luxury and magnificence, affected the pomp and power of Princes. At ſame time therefore that a reformation in religion itſelf was eſtabliſhed, a wiſe reſolution was taken, to reduce the overgrown wealth and grandeur of that Church, which had, by perfidy and ſuperſtition, engroſſed the faireſt eſtates of the nobility, and ſuch immenſe riches, as to render it formidable

formidable to the commonwealth itſelf, and which, if unaltered, muſt have proven too potent an adverſary to the infant eſtabliſhment. The Prelatical Order was therefore deprived of their dangerous diſtinctions and prerogatives, or rather annihilated, their lands and wealth were annexed to the Crown, or reſtored to an impoveriſhed nobility; and *Superintendants* were appointed, who diſcharged the ſpiritual duties of the Epiſcopal office, without any ſhare of temporal authority.

The Reformation ſpread ſoon into Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, France, Britain, the Netherlands and Spain. The Calviniſts chiefly ſettled in the Lower Hungary, and the Lutherans in the Upper. But as theſe differed only in ſmaller matters, and both were united againſt the authority and doctrine of the Church of Rome, they entered into a mutual agreement among themſelves for the ſupport of the common cauſe.

The Battoris or Princes of Tranſylvania, made ſome efforts to obſtruct the progreſs of the Reformation, but to no purpoſe, as it there made its way and maintained its ground.

In Poland it met with the countenance of civil authority; and King Sigiſmond Auguſtus did, in the year 1548, allow both Lutheran and Calviniſt churches to be ſettled in his kingdom.

In France, the Reformation made its firſt appearance at Meaux, *A. D.* 1523. There it made a conſiderable progreſs, notwithſtanding the moſt horrid cruelties exerciſed for the extirpation of it. The famous Calvin ſoon became the head of the Reformers in that kingdom, drew the attention of the public, and grew into high favour with Margaret Queen of Navarre, ſiſter to Francis I. who was herſelf warmly attached to the cauſe of the Reformation. He was born at Noyon in Picardy, on the

10th of July 1509. He firſt ſtudied at Paris, afterwards at Bourges, where he drank in with admiration the religious opinions of Luther. His genius was extenſive and penetrating, his learning deep and diverſified, his application indefatigable, whilſt all were charmed with his flowing, perſuaſive eloquence, and ſtruck with his exalted piety. By theſe accompliſhments, his fervent zeal, his numerous writings, and pulpit-oratory, he roſe to eminent diſtinction among the Reformers, and was of ſignal ſervice in promoting that glorious cauſe which they had eſpouſed. When Francis I. was committing the greateſt outrages againſt the friends of the Reformation, Calvin found himſelf obliged to retire out of France, to avoid the impending ſtorm. He took refuge in Geneva, where he was choſen chief Miniſter; and there he eſtabliſhed the Proteſtant religion, and modelled that Church, both in doctrine, dicipline and worſhip, to a high degree of primitive purity.

The Hugonots, as the Reformers in France were called, multiplied every where, were vigorouſly ſupported by ſome of the greateſt Princes in the realm, maintained wars and fought many bloody battles in behalf of religion and liberty, though with various ſucceſs. Sometimes they enjoyed the auſpicious ſhelter of royal favour, at other times they groaned under the heavieſt preſſure of perſecution. Frequent conferences and councils were held with a view to terminate or ſoften religious differences.

A famous conference between the Catholics and reformed was opened at Poiſſy on the 9th of September 1561. The King and Queen, the Duke of Orleans, the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé and Margaret Queen of Navarre, were preſent to grace that illuſtrious Aſſembly. The Cardinals, Biſhops, and Doctors took their places, as did alſo twelve

twelve Miniſters of the reformed religion. Theodore de Beza was pitched on as the proper perſon to repreſent the principles and views of the Reformation, which he did, ſtanding and uncovered. In a long and elaborate diſcourſe, delivered with diſtinguiſhed ſpirit and eloquence, he nobly defended the cauſe in which he appeared, whilſt in a victorious manner he refuted the errors and pretenſions of Popery. Speaking of the Euchariſt, among other things, he ſaid, that the real body of Jeſus Chriſt was as far from the bread and wine, as the higheſt heaven from the earth.

The Prelates being offended at this aſſertion, Cardinal de *Tournon* demanded, that Beza ſhould be inſtantly ſilenced. But the Queen was pleaſed to interpoſe, and inſiſted that no interruption ſhould be given, and that Beza ſhould be heard at full length. After long and warm debates, the meeting broke up without effecting the principal end for which it was called.

New wars and commotions were excited: The Hugonots were expoſed to continual ſcenes of diſtreſs, and ſuffered as well as performed more for the ſake of religion, than perhaps any other part of the reformed Church. At laſt, Henry IV. King of France, partly from policy, as perceiving it impoſſible to ſuppreſs the Proteſtant doctrine, or perhaps from motives of religion in part, as he himſelf had been a Hugonot when King of Navarre, granted to the Reformers a free and univerſal toleration, by which they were allowed the full liberty of worſhipping God according to their conſciences, without moleſtation.

This was confirmed by the famous edict of Nantes in the year 1598, which afforded legal protection and ſecurity to the Proteſtants, both with reſpect

reſpect to religion, and to civil rights of every kind, and which continued in force till the ſame was revoked by Lewis XIV. *A. D.* 1685.

The Reformation ſoon made its way into Britain, and made a mighty progreſs both in England and Scotland. Although there were a great many people in England, well diſpoſed to the Proteſtant religion from principle, yet the immediate renunciation of the Pope's authority in that kingdom flowed from another cauſe. King Henry VIII. in order to ſhew himſelf a zealous ſon of the Church of Rome, had even wrote a book againſt *Luther* in the year 1521, for which the Pope beſtowed upon him the title of *Defender of the Faith*, which is retained to this day by the Britiſh Monarchs. Henry was a Prince of parts, and well ſkilled in philoſophy and divinity, but at ſame time he was of an amorous diſpoſition, and extremely inconſtant in his affection.

He had been married 18 years to Catharine of Arragon, relict of his elder brother. Having conceived a violent paſſion for Anna of Bullen, a celebrated beauty, and entertaining ſome ſcruples concerning the legitimacy of his marriage with his brother's widow, he applied to Clement VII. the Roman Pontif, for a diſſolution of his marriage with Catharine, and for a diſpenſation to enter into the connubial ſtate with the illuſtrious Lady who now engroſſed his entire affection. He was for a long time amuſed with expectations of both. But as the Pope was afraid of provoking the Emperor Charles V. to whom Queen *Catharine* was related, and affected a great many pretexts and evaſions, Henry, impatient and affronted, had recourſe to another method. He conſulted ſome of the learned Doctors in the European univerſities upon the ſubject of his matrimonial ſcruples, who gave it as their opinion, that wedlock with a brother's widow

was

was unlawful. Hereupon Catharine was divorced; and, notwithſtanding the Pontif's remonſtrances, the Engliſh Monarch married Anna Bullen, and aſſembled a Parliament, who declared him the ſupreme head of the Church of England, and ſolemnly renounced the juriſdiction of the Roman See, in the year 1535.

Upon this, the Pope paſſed a ſentence of excommunication againſt Henry, and declared his newly contracted marriage null and void. The King, reſolute in his meaſures, ſuppreſſed a prodigious number of monaſtries, convents and nunneries, ſeized on the vaſt revenues which belonged to them, and with part of them, founded ſeveral Proteſtant biſhoprics and colleges; and, although he ſtill adhered to many of the tenets and uſages of the Romiſh Church, yet he paved the way for that more thorough Reformation which took place under his ſucceſſor Edward VI. *. This extraordinary Prince gave early diſcoveries of exalted piety and wiſdom, and zealouſly promoted the great work of the Reformation. During his ſhort reign, and by the aſſiſtance of Cranmer, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, as well as of other able and eminent Reformers, this was carried to a conſiderable degree of perfection, and eſtabliſhed by act of Parliament.

It underwent a ſhort but ſorrowful eclipſe under Queen Mary who ſucceeded to the Crown. She was a great bigot to the Church of Rome, and of a cruel and arbitrary temper. Intent on the project of reſtoring Popery, ſhe had recourſe to the moſt bloody and perſecuting meaſures, againſt all who oppoſed her violent and ſuperſtitious deſign. Among many others that ſuffered martyrdom for the Proteſtant religion during her reign, Cranmer, that illuſtrious Reformer, and a Prelate of diſtinguiſhed learning

* *Vide* Biſhop Burnet's Hiſtory of the Reformation of the Church of England.

learning and piety, fell a ſacrifice to her unrelenting fury. Providence was pleaſed to ſhorten this ſcene of ſuffering, which wore ſo gloomy an aſpect inauſpicious to the intereſts of the Reformation. She died in the year 1558, after a reign of five years, and was happily ſucceeded by Lady Elizabeth, a Princeſs illuſtrious for many great and ſhining accompliſhments, and particularly for her zeal in reſtoring and eſtabliſhing the reformed Religion.

In the year 1562, ſhe cauſed a ſynod or convocation to be aſſembled at London, in which a Confeſſion of the Proteſtant Faith was drawn up and agreed upon. In her reign many edicts and acts of Parliament were publiſhed againſt the Catholics, the people were delivered from the bondage of Papal tyranny and ſuperſtition, and ſhe eſtabliſhed religion with reſpect to doctrine, worſhip, and eccleſiaſtical government, on that footing, which is continued in England to this day. Queen Elizabeth likewiſe proved the bulwark of the Proteſtant cauſe in Europe, and powerfully ſupported the Proteſtants in Scotland, France, and the Low Countries. She was extremely deſirous that the plan of Reformation which ſhe had introduced, ſhould be univerſally acknowledged within her dominions, and thereupon the famous act of Uniformity was paſſed, by which all her ſubjects were commanded to conform themſelves accordingly. But great numbers of them were for refining matters to a ſtill higher degree, were for receding farther even from any appearances of Popery, and caſt their eyes upon the churches of Geneva and Switzerland, as models which they ought to imitate, particularly in regard of public worſhip and eccleſiaſtical polity. Such went by the denomination of Puritans and Nonconformiſts, who formed a conſiderable body, and ſeparated from the eſtabliſhed Church. That indeed

deed adopted Calviniſm with reſpect to articles of faith, whilſt it retained the Epiſcopal Hierarchy and ſome ancient uſages. The Puritans or Preſbyterians, on the other hand, were for aboliſhing the Prelatical order and diſcipline, condemned the Liturgy that was uſed, the various veſtments of the Clergy, the many feſtival days, and ſeveral rites and ceremonies, ſuch as kneeling at the ſacrament of the Lord's Supper, uſing the ſign of the Croſs in baptiſm, bowing at the name of Jeſus, giving a ring in marriage, nominating god-fathers and god-mothers for the education of children, and the confirmation of them by Epiſcopal impoſition of hands.

In *Scotland* the Reformation made an early appearance. The great doctrines and principles of it had been eagerly imbibed by ſeveral of that nation, who had reſided in Germany during its progreſs in that part of the world. Upon their return to their native country, they diſſeminated with zeal and aſſiduity the ſeeds of religious truth, which ſoon ſprang up into a plentiful harveſt. The public attention was rouzed, and books and diſcourſes on ſuch an important controverſy were with avidity ſought after, and deeply intereſted multitudes of people. In a little time, great numbers of all ranks and denominations conceived an implacable hatred to Popery, and bravely ſtood forth in behalf of the Reformation. But they met at firſt with violent oppoſition both from Church and State, whilſt they encountered difficulties with ſingular reſolution, and ſome of them ſuffered even unto death. It was an ardous enterprize to ſubvert the eſtabliſhed religion, a fabric which had been reared with ſo much art, which had ſtood its ground for ſo many ages, that was ſupported by civil power, defended by a ſuperſtitious and ſelf-deſigning Clergy, that could plead antiquity, poſſeſſion, prejudice and education; and

to

to introduce into the room of this, a new, a pure, and much more perfect ſyſtem.

To atchieve ſo noble an exploit, to ſurmount the obſtacles, and to conquer ſuch formidable enemies as oppoſed it, a ſkilful and intrepid leader was required. Such a one happily aroſe in the perſon of the celebrated John Knox, who boldly ſtood forth the great Champion of the Reformation among the Scots, and may juſtly be conſidered as the illuſtrious founder of their Church.

He began his public miniſtry at St Andrews *A. D.* 1547, and by his acting and writing, by the fire of his zeal and the force of his eloquence, ſo ſuitable and requiſite to the circumſtances of the times, bore down all before him *. Knox levelled his blow at the whole ſyſtem of Popery, and expoſed its corruptions and uſurpations in their whole extent, with an undaunted and unwearied ardour, with a firmneſs and fortitude that roſe ſuperior to every difficulty, and never feared the face of man †. Providence was pleaſed to proſper his pious endeavours in a remarkable manner. The Catholic religion was condemned and aboliſhed, the Reformation advanced with ſpeedy ſteps, and obtained the legal ſanction of public authority in Scotland, in the year 1560, under the reign of Queen Mary.

In the year 1566, the Aſſembly approved in general the Doctrine, Worſhip, and Diſcipline adopted by the Churches of Geneva and Switzerland, in contradiſtinction to the Epiſcopal Hierarchy and Liturgy. The Earl of *Murray*, Regent of the kingdom in the King's minority, exerted his endeavours to extirpate the Romiſh religion, and to eſtabliſh

* Dr Robertſon's Hiſtory of Scotland, Vol. I. p. 111.

† The Earl of *Morton* who attended Knox's funeral, ſaid of him, "There lies One who never feared the face of "Man."

bliſh Calviniſm. *James* VI. was bred up in the Proteſtant Religion, and when he was come of age to aſſume the reins of government, he maintained the ſame in his dominions; and in the year 1592, he, by act of Parliament, eſtabliſhed, in the moſt ample manner, Preſbyterian Church-Government, by Kirk-ſeſſions, Preſbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Aſſemblies *.

It was upon this republican plan that the Reformation was introduced in Scotland †, and the great body of the nation admired it with a kind of ſacred zeal, as what was moſt remote from Popery, and what they apprehended was moſt congru-

* The firſt Book of Diſcipline compoſed by Knox and other Miniſters as the platform or model of the intended Preſbyterian policy, was preſented to a Convention of Eſtates, in the year 1561. The ſecond Book of Diſcipline was agreed to by the General Aſſembly 1578. It was revived and ratified by many Acts of different Aſſemblies, particularly in the year 1638. And it was according to this, that Eccleſiaſtical Government in Scotland was eſtabliſhed by Law, *A. D.* 1592, and 1690, and this ſtill continues to be the ſtandard of Diſcipline.

† After the abolition of Epiſcopacy, a few ſuperintendants were indeed appointed for ſome time, whoſe proper office it was to inſpect the life and doctrine of the Clergy, and to preſide in inferior judicatories, which were then in an infant ſtate: But they themſelves were ſubject to a General Aſſembly, they held no ſeat in Parliament, and were deſtitute of Epiſcopal rank and revenue. In the year 1598, the General Aſſembly was prevailed on through the intrigues of the Court, to declare it lawful for Miniſters to ſit in Parliament, and allowed fifty-one perſons to be choſen for that purpoſe, which was about equal to the number of Eccleſiaſtics who were in ancient times called to Parliament. But then ſuch who were veſted with this privilege, were conſidered as mere repreſentatives of the Church, they were annually choſen from a leet of certain Miniſters nominated by the Aſſembly, they were accountable for their conduct to this ſupreme Judicature, and ſubject to their juriſdiction, they neither poſſeſſed ſpiritual authority, nor miniſterial precedency above their brethren.

ous to the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, and to the practice of the primitive Church.

After the death of Queen Elizabeth in the year 1603, when the Crowns of England and Scotland came to be united in the perſon of King James VI. he himſelf eſpouſed the forms of the Engliſh Church, and in a more ſtrenuous manner than formerly, obtruded a kind of mixed Epiſcopacy upon the Scotiſh nation *, which was productive of great and laſting diſcontents, and being perſiſted in, contributed, with other cauſes, to prove fatal to his ſon Charles I. Preſbyterian government was at laſt, after many ſtruggles, reſtored and eſtabliſhed in the fulleſt manner, at the glorious Revolution by King William in 1688, and was ſolemnly confirmed by the articles of the *Union* under Queen Anne, in the year 1707, and continues to this day †.

The Reformation made a ſlower progreſs in *Ireland*. It was introduced into that kingdom under Henry VIII. in the year 1535. Brown, Archbiſhop of Dublin, exerted his utmoſt endeavours to expell Papal ſuperſtition, deſtroyed the images and relics that were beheld with a blind veneration by the deluded multitude, laid aſide the Romiſh rites and ceremonies, and eſtabliſhed the reformed Religion within his dioceſe, whilſt Henry baniſhed the Monks, and ſeized their wealth. This good work was farther advanced in the time of Edward VI. and obtained a regular eſtabliſhment under Queen Elizabeth, when the Iriſh nation embraced

* Dr Robertſon's Hiſt. of Scotland, vol. II. p. 208, 213, 255.

† By anticipating a few events, ſome may perhaps think that I depart from the ſtrict laws of Hiſtorical Writing; but the reſtriction of my plan will, I hope, ſerve for my apology.

braced the ſame form of doctrine, worſhip, and diſcipline which were profeſſed in England, though a great number of Roman Catholics ſtill continue there, who cannot be prevailed on to become Proteſtants;—ſuch a deep root muſt Popery have taken amongſt them.

The Belgic provinces ſoon ſhook off the Papal yoke, and profeſſed the Proteſtant Religion. About the year 1532, a great many cities and ſome diſtricts removed the Popiſh Biſhops and Clergy, kindly received the miniſters of the Reformation, and readily imbibed the doctrines they taught. Philip II. King of Spain, apprehenſive of a revolt, and furiouſly bigotted to the Church of Rome, enacted the ſevereſt laws againſt all who ſhould attempt innovation in religious matters, and erected in the Low Countries the bloody tribunal of the Inquiſition. * The Duke of Alva was ſent thither from Spain with a formidable army, which, by his tyrannical orders, committed among the inhabitants the moſt horrid barbarities. But this cruel and ſanguinary conduct, inſtead of intimidating, exaſperated; and a kind of noble enthuſiaſtic ardour, both for civil and religious liberty, ſpread through the provinces, which roſe ſuperior to fear or force. A reſpectable confederacy was formed under the heroic and illuſtrious Prince of Orange, William of Naſſau, powerfully ſupported both by England and France, by which they were enabled to maintain a long and bloody war, in defence of their civil and ſacred rights. Providence was pleaſed to ſmile upon their honourable efforts; they were happily delivered both from the Spaniſh and Papal yoke, from the bondage of tyranny and ſuperſtition,

* The Duke of Alva boaſted that in the ſpace of a few years he had diſpatched in the Netherlands 36,000 ſouls by the hand of the common executioner.

ſuperſtition, and in the year 1581, the provinces of Holland, Zeland, Friſeland, Groningen, Utrecht, Guelderland, and Zutphen, were united into one mighty Republic, and the Proteſtant Religion, according to the form of Calviniſm, was ſolemnly eſtabliſhed.

Even in Spain and Italy, the ſeeds of the Reformation were early ſown in many provinces, and multitudes of people opened their eyes to that light of truth that dawned on the world. This was more remarkable in Venice, Tuſcany and Naples. The Neapolitans in particular never would admit the court of Inquiſition among them, and even took up arms to oppoſe ſome violent attempts that were made with this view. In the year 1546, the averſion of the people againſt the corruptions and uſurpations of the Church of Rome roſe to a great height, and various commotions were excited, which it was extremely difficult to appeaſe. Peter Martyr and Bernard Ochino, two eminent preachers, highly diſtinguiſhed for their zeal and eloquence, expoſed with unbounded freedom the errors and ſuperſtitions of popery, and rouzed the indignation of many. The Emperor himſelf, Charles V. heard *Ochino* preach at Naples with great ſatisfaction. So much was he ſtruck with his powerful and perſuaſive oratory, that he declared of this famous miniſter,—That he preached with ſuch ſpirit and devotion, as were ſufficient to make the very ſtones weep.

Indeed ſome have been of opinion that however Charles may have lived, yet he died a Proteſtant. He may have been fettered for ſome time by the prejudices of education, and hurried away by ambition, intereſt, and reſentment, when acting a part on the public theatre of the world. But every one is well acquainted with the rare and ſingular reſolution

lution of this illuſtrious Prince towards the cloſe of life. Though one of the greateſt of temporal Monarchs; though he had paſſed through the moſt ſplendid ſcenes of grandeur, victory, and triumph; though in actual poſſeſſion of ample revenues and extenſive dominions both in Europe and America; yet he voluntarily reſigned the imperial diadem and dignity, and all his vaſt poſſeſſions; laid aſide his former magnificence, diſmiſſed his pompous retinue, his guards and officers, bid an adieu to courts and camps, to cabals and intrigues, the policy of ſtates and the enterpriſes of war: He retreated from the world, ſequeſtered himſelf with a ſolitary few whom he choſe for his friends and favourites, and ſpent the remainder of his days in humble obſcurity, amidſt the ſhade of tranquility, and the repoſe of religion. Then he was at leiſure and unbiaſſed, could diſcern more clearly the errors of ſuperſtition, could weigh with more candour, and perceive with greater certainty the important truths of true religion. This ſeems to have been ſtrongly preſumed *. For no ſooner did this Monarch expire, than the train of Eccleſiaſtics who had attended him in his retirement, were ſeized on by the jealous blood-thirſty Inquiſitors, and committed to the flames. This cruel fate *Auguſtin Caſal*, and Conſtantine Pontius, the Emperor's preacher and confeſſor underwent, as well as ſeveral others.

In Italy the progreſs of the Reformation was very much checked by the proximity of the Roman Pontif, by his various and more immediate connections with the Italian Princes and States, and by the terrors of the Inquiſition.

Theſe too, raged and triumphed in Spain, which too ſoon ſuppreſſed a ſpirit of Reformation, that began to break out, and was diffuſed among multitudes

* Burnet's Hiſtory of the Reformation.

tudes of the people. Nay ſome, who had once been the teachers and defenders of Popery, were themſelves converted, became champions for the Proteſtant religion, and by their zeal and diligence enlightened the minds of many.

For well-atteſted hiſtory informs us, * that Charles V. and his ſon Philip II. ſent ſome Spaniſh divines into Germany, England, and Flanders, in order to convert the Proteſtants in thoſe countries to the Roman faith. But ſo it was, that they themſelves were brought over from the Catholic and embraced the reformed Religion. They were perſons eminent for learning and piety, and full of zeal they returned into their native country, there to propagate the Proteſtant faith. Many illuſtrious converts were the firſt fruits of their miniſtry; but theſe, with their faithful, paſtors were ſingled out, ſeized by the hands of mercileſs Inquiſitors, and cruelly ſacrificed on ſcaffolds and at the ſtake.

But in many other countries the Proteſtant cauſe ſpread its conqueſts far and wide. Not only were the pillars of popery ſhaken, but the whole fabric of Romiſh ſuperſtition was demoliſhed. Babylon ſeemed to fall as a milſtone in the mighty waters, and in her room uproſe a ſyſtem of genuine Chriſtianity, which had been hid for ages and generations.

Thus rapid and extenſive was the progreſs of the glorious Reformation, which for its ſwiftneſs flew like lightning over the world; but which, for its kindly and beneficent influences, was welcomed after a long night of darkneſs, as the delightful dawning of chearful day.

Rome beheld this with amazement and anguiſh, with all the bitterneſs of falſe zeal, and all the tranſports of political rage; Thus to find ſo rich

a

* Dr Geddes's Tracts, vol. I. p. 447, &c.

a ſpoil haſtily plucked out of her hands; to ſee ſo great a part of Europe unexpectedly torn from her, and ſo many valuable kingdoms and countries hitherto devotees and tributaries to her, at once raviſhed out of her boſom.

Her authority, her infallibility, her conclaves, and councils, formerly venerable or formidable, were now deſpiſed. Her papal bulls and edicts, her excommunications, interdicts, anathemas, and all the thunder of the Vatican, were now treated with contempt. Whole provinces and powerful ſtates, openly broke aſunder the chains of ancient ſuperſtition, which had formerly fettered them, withdrew publicly from the juriſdiction of the Roman See, and in a conſtitutional manner erected independant reformed churches of their own.

Rome became apprehenſive of her very exiſtence, and dreaded the downfal of the whole papal empire. Many Catholics have without heſitation acknowledged, that the univerſal ruin of their cauſe muſt have enſued, had not the force of the ſecular arm been called in to ſupport their tottering ſituation, and fire and ſword been let looſe upon thoſe who were only brandiſhing the weapons of reaſon and argument.

The moſt cruel engines were ſet to work, and recourſe was had to the meaneſt and moſt malicious methods of aſſault. The Roman Pontifs, and their adherents, inflamed with all the rage of reſentment, encouraged ſecret aſſaſſinations and private conſpiracies, open tumults and inſurrections; ſet on foot the moſt dreadful perſecutions, played off the infernal tortures of *Inquiſition*, and excited wars and commotions in many places, in order to uphold the ſinking ſyſtem of ſuperſtition, and to bear down by violence that ſpirit of Reformation, which they could not otherwiſe repreſs or ſubdue.

Beſides

Beſides what has been occaſionally glanced at, and many other inſtances that might be mentioned, witneſs the barbarous maſſacre of Paris under Charles IX. on Bartholomew's day, the 24th of Auguſt 1572, when 100,000 Proteſtants were butchered in France, in the ſpace of one week.

Witneſs the horrid conſpiracy formed in England in the reign of James I. (though providentially prevented) of blowing up the Parliament-houſe at London with gun-powder, and deſtroying a Proteſtant Prince, Proteſtant Lords and Commoners, upon the 5th of November 1605.

Witneſs the rebellion in Ireland, when about 150,000 Proteſtants were murdered, under the reign of Charles I. *A. D.* 1641.

Theſe ſanguinary counſels, ſuch cruel proceedings, did no doubt greatly impede and interrupt the farther advancement of the Reformation.

For, conſidering how ſuitable this was to the juſteſt notions of religion, and how ſtrongly it was founded upon principles of civil as well as of religious liberty, it was not unreaſonable to expect, that being once introduced, it would have ſpread its triumphs every where through Chriſtendom. Nor was it unnatural to think, that Sovereign Princes would have been very well diſpoſed to have rendered themſelves ſtill more deſpotic in their own kingdoms, and even upon a political account, abſtracting from religious conſiderations, been averſe from tolerating any longer within their dominions a ſyſtem, which demanded and drew the allegiance of their ſubjects to a foreign Power, yea, claimed a ſubjection of conſcience too ſacred to have been ſacrificed even to a natural Prince.

Yet ſo it was, that a great part of the world ſtill continued, and to this day remains inſlaved to the tyranny and ſuperſtition of Rome.

Beſides

Beſides the unhappy influence which wars and perſecutions raiſed againſt the Proteſtants, had to intimidate ſome, and to cool the zeal of others, various other cauſes contributed to retard the growth of the Reformation.

Whilſt many might be indifferent as to all religion, or unſollicitous about the character or form of that which they profeſſed, others would be biaſſed by early prejudices of education, and ſtrong prepoſſeſſions in favour of the ancient mother-church.

Secular views, political connections, worldly intereſt, eaſe, and ſecurity, would operate upon multitudes.

Spain judged it adviſeable to protect the Holy See, as the Pope's alliance and authority might be of great ſervice in preſerving its dominions in Italy. If the proſpect of ſeizing the revenues of the Church induced any to promote the Reformation, the actual poſſeſſion of them and the fear of loſing them, engaged others to ſtand faſt to the intereſts of Rome. The Biſhops in France united more cloſely with the Roman See, at the time of the Reformation, than they had formerly done, for fear of being deprived of their eccleſiaſtical dignities and benefices.

Some Sovereigns were ſo ſituated, as to have reaſon to dread civil confuſion and embroilment, did they attempt a change in religion; and in ſome places a deluded populace, and a ſuperſtitious intereſted Clergy wholly dependent upon, and devoted to the See of Rome, would be ready to move heaven and earth againſt them.

In Germany, great temporal power is annexed to many biſhoprics, and other eccleſiaſtical benefices, which would not be eaſily reſigned, and the ſecular Princes might be drawn to attach themſelves

ſelves to the Romiſh communion, from hopes of reaching the Imperial dignity.

The Italian States are more directly under the eye of the Roman Pontifs, and derive a kind of luſtre and influence from their reſidence amongſt them; the Princes have intimate connection with the court of Rome; the nobility who enter into the Church are ſure of promotion in it, and many of them have an eye to the Papal chair, as none but Italians are advanced to that dignity.

But further, it muſt be remembered, that the Reformation was rather a ſudden and unexpected event, which ſhould lead to the acknowledgment of a more immediate Providence, than the effect of a long and deep projected plan, that had, by previous deliberation and concert, cut out every action, and diſtributed the execution into proper hands, that had maturely digeſted the bold and arduous enterprize, laid the whole train of procedure, and ſet in motion all the ſprings with art and union.

Beſides, the Church of Rome was concentered in one infallible Head. The Proteſtant Princes, by the very principles which they profeſſed, could not be linked together by ſuch an indiſſoluble band, and acting as free and independent Sovereigns without a common head, at ſame time pleading for freedom of conſcience, were more at liberty to proſecute their own ſeveral ſchemes of Reformation. This, however, it is evident, would give their enemy a conſiderable advantage over them, eſpecially as they had been in long poſſeſſion; whilſt the other were ſtruggling for new opinions, and for the eſtabliſhment of a new ſyſtem.

Different ſects and parties likewiſe aroſe among the Proteſtants themſelves, diſtinguiſhed by various names, Lutherans and Calviniſts, Zuinglians, Anabaptiſts, Epiſcopals and Preſbyterians. All the reformed

formed Churches agreed in this general principle, That the Scriptures of Truth, infallible in all things, were the ſole ſtandard of religion, by which all matters were to be determined. But then they ſometimes differed in their explanations and inferences.

The Lutheran Church, for inſtance, holds that the Body and Blood of Chriſt are materially preſent in the Euchariſt, though in an incomprehenſible manner, whilſt the Calviniſts and Zuinglians conſider the Bread and Wine as ſacred ſymbols only of the Body and Death of Chriſt.

The Lutherans maintain that the Eternal Decrees of God, which reſpect the ſalvation or miſery of mankind, are founded on a previous knowledge of their conduct and character; whilſt the Calviniſts conſider the Divine Decrees as free and unconditional, as reſting on the mere will of Deity, abſtracting from the views or actions of the creature.

The Lutherans make large conceſſions as to matters of an external nature, and what they judge indifferent, ſuch as images for the adorning of churches, various veſtments for the Clergy, private confeſſion of ſins, the uſe of wafers in the Sacrament of the Supper, and the form of exorciſm in the adminiſtration of Baptiſm, with a variety of other ceremonies.

The Calviniſts are for retrenching ſuperfluous rites and obſervances, and would reduce all things in religion to pure and primitive ſimplicity.

With reſpect to eccleſiaſtical polity and diſcipline, various ſentiments are entertained amongſt the Reformed, ſome admiring the ſplendor of Epiſcopal Hierarchy, whilſt others prefer Preſbyterian parity.

Thus ſchiſm and controverſy were produced, though about matters of inferior importance; nor would it be eaſy, conſidering the frame of human nature,

nature, to ſeclude all mixtures of an heterogeneous kind, which, though entirely extrinſic from the merits of the cauſe itſelf, might yet have a bad effect. Something of a party ſpirit might appear, which, with the heat of argument and conteſt, would abate fraternal affection and reciprocal confidence, ſerve to divide the attention of Proteſtants, and to diminiſh their zeal againſt the common foe.

Some have been of opinion, that had the Reformers, particularly Zuinglius and Calvin, been content at firſt to have only combated and relinquiſhed abſolutely dangerous errors in Popery, and tolerated ſome of her mere external forms and uſages, the tranſition to the great body of the Reformed would have been rendered more eaſy, and leſs offenſive to vulgar minds, too ſenſibly ſtruck with outward ſhew and appearance. Nor could the multitude, as ſome would repreſent matters, be all at once reconciled to a Religion which was exhibited in a naked light, and ſtript of thoſe ſplendid appendages and decorations, which had for a long time paſt dazzled their eyes and imaginations. But if this was any where the caſe, we are apt to believe, that directly contrary views operated in other places, and rather forwarded the Reformation, particularly in Geneva and Switzerland, the United Provinces, and Scotland.

With regard to the extent and power of Popery and Proteſtantiſm, it is not ſo eaſy to form an exact eſtimate.

All Italy, Spain, and Portugal, the greateſt part of France, Poland, Hungary, ſome of the Swiſs Cantons, and about two-thirds of Germany, are devoted to the See of Rome. On the Proteſtant ſide ſtand Great Britain and Ireland, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, the greateſt part of Switzerland, and a conſiderable part of Germany. There are likewiſe

likewiſe great numbers of Hugonots in France; there are multitudes of the Reformed in Poland; and Pruſſia is in a good meaſure become a Proteſtant kingdom. In Courland, Hungary, and Tranſylvania, the number of Proteſtants is very conſiderable.

However, when one conſiders the groſs ſuperſtition and deſpotiſm of the Church of Rome, the falſe foundations upon which it is built, the numberleſs ſtratagems and contrivances by which this artificial fabric is ſupported; and on the other hand, that the Reformed Proteſtant Religion ſtands upon the principles of truth, is founded on the ſacred rights of private conſcience and public liberty, and is favourable both for Princes and people; it is to be hoped, upon theſe accounts, as alſo from prophetic declarations of Scripture, that the total ruin and downfal of Popery are not extremely remote. There are many good grounds to expect, that the eyes of the whole world will at laſt be opened to diſcern the truth, and that they will abhor and abjure that deluſion and tyranny, by which they have been ſo long held in chains, and animated with noble motives of true Religion and liberty, eſpouſe the cauſe of the bleſſed Reformation, ſo auſpicious to both.

Thus, unwilling to diſunite this very important ſubject, I have thrown together what appeared to me moſt inſtructive and intereſting in one connected view.

We muſt now return back a little, to take notice of a few things not improper to be mentioned. The Popiſh Biſhops and Clergy, being greatly alarmed at the progreſs of the Reformation, deviſed every method that could be thought of, and employed their utmoſt efforts to obſtruct it. Among others of a more violent or inſidious nature, they had

had likewiſe reſort, eſpecially at firſt, to frequent councils, provincial, national, and general.

One particularly was held at Paris, and another at Bourges in 1528; one at Cologne in the year 1536, and a ſecond in the ſame place, in 1549.

A council was conveened by Cardinal Otton, Biſhop of Augſburgh, at Dilingen in 1548; one aſſembled at Mentz, and another at Treves, in the year 1549. In theſe and many other councils that might be mentioned, the members proceeded with great zeal, and not only condemned the doctrines of the Reformation, which they were pleaſed to call by the names of Schiſm and Hereſy, but alſo drew up particular decrees relating to faith, and publiſhed canons with reſpect to the uſages and diſcipline of the Romiſh church, in contradiſtinction to the tenets and principles of the Reformers.

A general council had been appointed to meet at Trent, as formerly noticed, which was accordingly opened on the 13th of December 1545. After various adjournments or ſuſpenſions, it was conveened a-new in May 1551, and was again opened in January 1562.

At firſt it was chiefly compoſed of Italian and Spaniſh Prelates, but afterwards the Biſhops from France and other Catholic kingdoms likewiſe came up to it. In this council they confirmed the whole ſyſtem of Popery, guarded it by a great number of decrees and canons, condemned the doctrines, writings, and proceedings of the Reformers, endeavoured to colour over by the varniſh of vague, ambiguous expreſſions, ſome of their own moſt obnoxious tenets, and appointed various regulations with reſpect to diſcipline and manners; particularly thoſe of the eccleſiaſtical Orders, who were ſunk into great diſſoluteneſs and profligacy. But any deciſions which had a tendency to reſtrain or reform abuſes, were not

not duly ſupported by the authority of the Church, but allowed to fall into deſuetude, whilſt thoſe which ſerved to promote the pre-eminence of the Roman Pontifs, and the abſurdities of Romiſh ſuperſtition, were ſacredly maintained.

The aſſembled Fathers were borne down or cajoled by the intrigue and influence of the Roman Legates who preſided amongſt them, and who were more intent to get every thing decided that might be favourable to the See of Rome, than by the principles of right reaſon and ſound Chriſtianity. Inſtead of acknowledging the ſole authority of Scripture in matters of religion, as Proteſtants do, they admitted and put upon a level with this, oral tradition, avowed the ſupreme authority of the Church, and the infallibility of the Pope, who, as Chriſt's Vicegerent, had the proper power and title to explain both the written and unwritten word. This at once breaks down the ſacred fence and ſecurity of Divine truth, and flings open a wide door for deluſion and impoſition of every kind.

Nay, encouragement is given to thoſe who appear as champions for the Catholic Faith, to declare, as too many have done in a moſt blaſphemous manner, that the edicts of the Roman Pontifs and the aſſertion of oral tradition, are of higher authority than Scripture itſelf. Whilſt the Church of Rome ſeals up the ſacred fountains of truth, ſo far as they can, in an unknown tongue, and goes the length of affirming that the Bible was not compoſed for the uſe of the multitude, but for their ghoſtly rulers and teachers; the council of *Trent* paſſed a ſolemn decree, with a view to depretiate that holy Book, and to advance their own deſpotic deſigns, declaring that the ancient Latin tranſlation of the Scriptures, commonly called the *Vulgate*, is an authentic, accurate and perfect tranſlation, though

though it confeſſedly abounds with many errors of a very groſs kind, and wraps up the real meaning of the inſpired writers, in an affected barbariſm and obſcurity of language.

Such were the proceedings of the council of Trent, as to give offence to many Divines even of the Catholic communion. Their decrees were indeed implicitly acknowledged in Italy, Germany and Poland, but in other countries they were not ſo fully adopted, as infringing upon the prerogatives of Princes, and the privileges of the churches eſtabliſhed in their dominions.

* The deciſions and canons of this council were ſigned by 245 Prelates, and the Pope confirmed them without exception or reſtriction, by his bull of 26th January 1564. The Proteſtant Princes and States would by no means acknowledge the Council of Trent, but faithfully adhered to the confeſſion of Auſburgh, or the ſtill more enlarged principles of the Reformation.

When the Roman Pontifs obſerved, how much their own glory and the majeſty of their church were eclipſed by the loſſes they had ſuſtained, and by the progreſs of that oppoſition which was now made to their authority, they judged it proper to found a new religious fraternity, that ſhould be entirely devoted to their intereſts, and the purpoſe of whoſe inſtitution ſhould be, to ſupport the Papal throne, and to propagate the Romiſh religion. This became the more neceſſary, as the two famous mendicant ſocieties of Dominicans and Franciſcans, who had for ages paſt held ſuch an univerſal ſway, were now upon the decline, and incapable of acting with their accuſtomed vigour. What was ſo earneſtly ſought for, was found in the powerful and ingenious Order of Jeſuits, *A. D.* 1540. Their founder

* Du Pin's Eccleſ. Hiſt. Vol. IV. p. 118.

founder was Ignatius Loyola, a Spaniſh Knight, who, from a ſoldier, became an extraordinary fanatic, at ſame time that he was a man of an uncommon and enterprizing genius.

The members of this ſociety hold a middle rank between the regular and ſecular Clergy. They indeed live in convents, and are bound by certain religious vows, yet they are exempt from many burthenſome ſervices to which other Monaſtic orders are ſubject, and are allowed more leiſure, free converſe, and a greater range in the world, that ſo they may better promote the profeſſed ends of their inſtitution. Accordingly, they ſpread and multiplied with amazing rapidity, through all the kingdoms and countries of the world, and from their commanding influence has the Court of Rome derived wonderful aid and ſupport, whilſt they, on the other hand, have been highly favoured, and, in reſpect of worldly wealth and grandeur, ſingularly fortunate.

In every controverſy with the Romiſh church they have appeared as the moſt zealous champions to defend her doctrines and juſtify her claims, and to attack with boldneſs, as deceived, and heretics, all who preſume to oppoſe Papal power and ſuperſtition. They excel in ſubtlety and eloquence, are great adepts in policy and ſtate-intrigue, and by their knowledge, art, and enterprizing ſpirit, their verſatility of temper, and dexterity of conduct, they ingratiate themſelves with the rich and powerful, inſinuate into the ſecrets of families, and even the cabinet of Princes. They take upon them to modify the doctrines and to relax the rules of Religion, ſo as to ſuit themſelves to every company and pleaſe every ſociety; and thus they multiply proſelytes, by ſhading the ſevere aſpect of morality, and mak-

ing many large conceſſions *. They have indeed made vigorous efforts, and performed many exploits in all parts of the globe, for the converſion of infidels, eſpecially in America, Africa, and India. And their labours would have been entitled to immortal glory, had they been honeſtly and conſcientiouſly directed. But authentic records inform us, that theſe Jeſuitical apoſtles had not ſo much in view the propagating the religion of Jeſus, as making partizans to Popery, and that they were much more attentive to ſecular ſchemes by which they might enrich and aggrandize their own Order, than in reforming the manners or enlightening the minds of men.

They acquired immenſe poſſeſſions and treaſures at home and abroad, entered into cabals and factions, excited tumults and diſſentions, and became extremely licentious and dangerous. At laſt they roſe to ſuch a pitch of opulence, power, policy, and enormity, as to give great offence to the Pontifs themſelves; they became objects of envy to the other eccleſiaſtical Orders, and of hatred and jealouſy in the kingdoms where they reſided. They governed with a kind of uncontroulable ſway for the ſpace of two centuries, when the diſſolution of their ſociety was abſolutely determined, as being no longer ſupportable, and when final ruin ruſhed upon them, unexpected and inevitable.

Different ſtates and countries concurred all at once, to fix on them a blot of indelible infamy, and to declare them enemies of the public, traitors, and parricides. In the year 1763, the Jeſuits were baniſhed Portugal and Pruſſia. In 1764 they were expelled the kingdom of France: In 1766, they were driven out of Bohemia and Denmark; in 1767,

* Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. Eng. by Dr Maclain, vol. IV. p. 354, 355.

1767, they were baniſhed the dukedoms of Mantua, Parma, and Milan, the republics of Genoa and Venice, and the Spaniſh dominions in America and Aſia; they were forbid to enter the Catholic cantons in Switzerland, and they were reſtrained in Florence. At length, by a bull of Clement XIV. dated at Rome the 25th of Auguſt, *A. D.* 1773, the whole ſociety of the Jeſuits was entirely ſuppreſſed *.

All the Divines of this century were educated in the ſchool of controverſy, and indeed all the countries of Europe were in a ſtate of religious agitation. The great revolution brought about by means of the Reformation, produced a general attention, ſet an edge upon mens ſpirits, made them enter into manifold diſquiſitions, and into all the heat of conteſt and argumentation. That this ſhould have been the caſe between Papiſts and Proteſtants is leſs ſurprizing, and that ſome of the latter ſhould have expreſſed themſelves with vehemence and aſperity, was not unnatural, conſidering the calumnies raiſed againſt them, the injuſtice they frequently met with from their implacable enemies, and what horrid cruelties of fire and ſword the holy inſtruments of the Reformation had ſuffered. Beſides, allowances are to be made for the taſte and genius of thoſe unpoliſhed times, which were juſt emerging from a ſtate of barbariſm. But though we need not wonder, yet we may regret, that many warm diſputes and differences aroſe among the Reformed themſelves, eſpecially between the Lutherans and Calviniſts. Theſe multiplied to a conſiderable degree; ſome of them were more important, many of them related to points of an abſtruſe

* The brevity of my plan, will, I hope, juſtify ſuch ſhort anticipations as theſe; beſides, I find ſuch things are occaſionally done by good hiſtorians.

abſtruſe or metaphyſical nature, others to external forms and uſages; and it muſt be candidly owned that parties became too violent and uncharitable.

All who wiſhed well to the intereſts of the Reformation ardently deſired to ſee an end of theſe home-bred contentions, eſpecially as the Roman Catholics availed themſelves of ſuch diſſentions. With this view, and to give, in a more particular manner, union and conſiſtency to the Lutheran Church, various healing overtures were projected. Many convocations and conferences were held, eſpecially among the Saxon doctors, at the earneſt deſire of Auguſtus, Elector of Saxony, and other perſonages of diſtinction. The principal one which gave the proſpect of an amicable compromiſe, took place at Torgaw, in the year 1576, the reſult of which was the famous Form of Concord which was publiſhed at Berg.

It was adopted by the Saxons, and by a great many Lutheran churches, but did not produce thoſe fruits of peace and harmony that were expected. The Calviniſts oppoſed it with great warmth, as unfavourable to them, and to the friends of religious liberty in general; and even many Lutheran churches were highly diſſatisfied with it, and with great firmneſs rejected it, particularly thoſe of Heſſia, Denmark, Sileſia, Brunſwick, Holſtein, Nuremberg, Pomerania. Beſides various other articles contained in it, thoſe more remarkably gave offence, which aſcribed too much to the freedom of the human will, and which aſſerted in too ſtrong terms, the corporal preſence of Chriſt in the Euchariſt.

Various attempts were made from time to time to aboliſh the Form of Concord; and the demanding a ſubſcription to it as a condition of church-communion, was looked on as an unreaſonable impoſition

impoſition which could not be ſubmitted to. Thence aroſe many tumults and controverſies which very much diſturbed the repoſe of the reformed churches. It was therefore ſolemnly ſuppreſſed in many places, and in proceſs of time, and by the mediation of eminent doctors and reſpectable perſonages, it loſt its authority, and fell into deſuetude.

So recently as in the year 1718, when diſputes began to be revived concerning it in Switzerland, more eſpecially in the canton of Bern, theſe roſe to ſuch a height, as to engage George I. King of Great Britain and the States-general of the United Provinces to interpoſe, in order to terminate thoſe unhappy diviſions which had been occaſioned, and which were like to have proved productive of further diſturbance. This had a happy effect, and brought it again into general diſcredit.

Even before the appearance of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed many perſons in moſt of the countries in Europe, particularly in Germany, Switzerland, Bohemia, and Moravia, who held peculiar and enthuſiaſtical notions in Religion; and ſoon after the Reformation, theſe broke forth more openly, and pretended to carry matters a great deal farther, beyond the limits of reaſon and the principles of ſociety. Such in a more remarkable manner were the Anabaptiſts, whoſe progreſs was alarming; ſome of whoſe tenets were extremely dangerous, whilſt they were guilty of the moſt irregular practices, and ſpread the ſcenes of war, tumult and confuſion in many places. Among other novelties they maintained,—That the viſible Church of Chriſt was to be exempt from all ſin; that every thing ought to be in common among the faithful; that all tithes and tribute ſhould be aboliſhed; that every Chriſtian had a power to preach the Goſpel; that paſtors and miniſters were unneceſſary; that the

the baptiſm of infants was ſinful; that civil magiſtrates were entirely uſeleſs in the kingdom of Chriſt; that he was ſoon in perſon to reign upon earth; and that God ſtill revealed his will to men by dreams and viſions.

Deſpiſing the prudent and more pacific proceedings of the Reformers, they had recourſe at once to ſanguinary meaſures, and declared war againſt all laws and magiſtrates, under a fanatical pretext that Chriſt himſelf was to aſſume the reins of civil and eccleſiaſtical government.

In the year 1525, they raiſed a numerous army, moſtly compoſed of the peaſants of Saxony, Swabia, Franconia, and Thuringia. Theſe were led on by Munzer, a man of intrepid reſolution, yet over-run with enthuſiaſm; but their career was ſtopped by the Elector of Saxony and other confederate Princes, who routed and diſperſed them, and put to death their fanatical ring-leader. This, however, did not check their bold and reſolute ſpirit. Their numbers multiplied, eſpecially in Germany, Holland, and Switzerland, where they endeavoured to excite the people to rebellion, and committed the moſt outrageous actions.

In the year 1533, a great number of the moſt furious Anabaptiſts made themſelves maſters of the city of Munſter in Weſtphalia. They gave themſelves out for the inſpired meſſengers of heaven, overturned all the eſtabliſhed inſtitutions, ſacred and political, and pretended to form a ſpiritual republic, the capital of which was to be the city they now poſſeſſed, that was as a new Jeruſalem to rule over all the earth. They placed at the head of affairs John Bockholt, a native of Leyden, a man of a very viſionary complexion, artful, ambitious and daring. Their empire continued, however, but for a ſhort ſeaſon. For in the year

1535,

1535, the Biſhop of Munſter and ſeveral German Princes beſieged the city, which ſtood it out for a long time. At laſt they made themſelves maſters of it, inflicted a moſt ignominious death upon the mock-monarch, and devoted to deſtruction a prodigious number of his fanatical followers.

This was a dreadful blow given to the cauſe of the Anabaptiſts; but Menno Simon, a native of Frieſland, revived their ſpirits, and undertook their defence. He was a perſon of extraordinary talents, of no inconſiderable learning, and of perſuaſive eloquence. During the ſpace of 25 years, he travelled from one country to another with his wife and children, teaching and preaching wherever he came. He aſſumed an air of ſingular ſanctity, recommended the practice of religion and morality to all, and though formerly a great profligate, became an eminent example of virtue. Thus he attracted the admiration of the multitude, and gained many proſelytes. He new-modelled the doctrines, and refined the notions of the Anabaptiſts, entirely excluded from his ſyſtem their groſs and dangerous opinions, and gave a ſoftning to any peculiar tenets which it was thought proper to retain, ſuch eſpecially as related to Baptiſm and Immerſion, the Millenium, the prohibition of oaths, and the abolition of war. Hereupon the Mennonites diſcarded from their communion the wild and rebellious Fanatics who were ready to riſe againſt government, to condemn laws human and divine, and to give into licentious courſes. In proceſs of time, however, the Anabaptiſts ſplit into various parties and claſſes, ſeveral of their peculiarities were laid aſide, and in ſome places, particularly in England, they are only diſtinguiſhable on account of their religious ſingularity in adminiſtrating Baptiſm ſolely to adult perſons

ſons by Immerſion, whence they are frequently denominated Baptiſts, or Antipœdobaptiſts.

It was about the year 1546, that the hereſy of Socinianiſm ſprang up, and ſpread into many countries, particularly in Poland and Moravia. It was derived from Lælius Socinus, who ſettled at Zurich, and propagated his opinions with conſiderable ſucceſs. Theſe were formed into a more regular ſyſtem by Fauſtus Socinus his nephew and heir, and attacked ſome of the eſſential articles of Chriſtianity. The Socinians denied the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and the Divinity of our Saviour. They own him to have been an illuſtrious Prophet, at ſame time teach, that he was born of the Virgin Mary, a mere, though extraordinary Man; and they affirm that the Holy Ghoſt does not conſtitute a diſtinct perſon, but is only a ſimple virtue or attribute of Deity, neither do they acknowledge his Divine Agency upon the minds of men.

They exalt the powers of man, and aſſume as a fundamental principle, that every thing in religion muſt come within the graſp of the human intellect, and that nothing ſhould be admitted which exceeds our underſtanding. Thus, though they acknowledge the ſacred original of the Scriptures, yet they file them down and conſtrue them after their own manner, and take a licentious liberty in modifying the doctrines of the goſpel, ſo as to ſuit their own contracted notions and imperfect views. They open a wide door for error, and an endleſs variety of religions; as the faculties of the human mind in individuals are as various in reſpect of extent and capacity as the faces of mankind. They do not conſider the narrow limits of human comprehenſion, the feebleneſs of our frame, what inadequate conceptions we have of every thing around us, and even of our very ſelves; that there is an important

difference

difference betwixt a partial and a perfect perception of truth, and that it is highly juſt and proper, that the reaſon of man ſhould ſtoop to the revelations of heaven.

Injurious as theſe *Unitarians* were by their principles and proceedings, to fair criticiſm, to true philoſophy, and ſound Chriſtianity, yet were their notions adopted by many. Their leaders exerted themſelves with unwearied zeal, publiſhed many books with a view to ſupport their ſyſtem, but which had a tendency to pervert the Scriptures, and detached a number of Miſſionaries into different countries, to make proſelytes and erect congregations. They differed from other ſects in the manner of propagating their opinions. For while moſt addreſs themſelves to the vulgar, and endeavour to obtain popularity, theſe principally applied to perſons of rank and wealth, and courted the patronage of learned men.

Yet did not they eſcape the ſevereſt cenſure, and the warmeſt oppoſition. Many elaborate treatiſes were publiſhed for their refutation, and the world beheld an unuſual ſpectacle, when Catholics, Calviniſts, and Lutherans, forgettting their peculiar diſſentions, united as one body to bear down the the growth of Socinianiſm.

The *Seventeenth* century opened with a very important conteſt which aroſe between Paul V. and the Republic of Venice. The Senate had enacted two wiſe laws in the year 1605, prohibiting the erection of any new religious houſes within their dominions, as alſo the alienation of any lay-poſſeſſions in favour of the Clergy, without their expreſs knowledge and conſent. They had likewiſe impriſoned two Eccleſiaſtics, and commenced a proſecution againſt them for capital crimes. Such procedure, however equitable and proper, was by

no means agreeable to an arrogant and imperious Pontif, who ſtiled himſelf Vice-God, and Monarch of Chriſtendom. Accordingly, in a rage of reſentment, he laid the whole Venetian State under an Interdict, for thus preſuming to encroach upon Papal power and juriſdiction. The Venetians highly incenſed at ſuch an arbitrary and tyrannical meaſure, declared it null and void, and baniſhed the Jeſuits and Capuchins for yielding obedience to the Pope's mandate. All things tended to an open rupture, and Paul V. was preparing to make war upon the Republic, whilſt their Senate on the other hand were concerting ſchemes for a total ſeparation from the Church of Rome, to which they were warmly prompted by the Engliſh and Dutch Ambaſſadors. In this criſis of affairs, an accommodation was brought about by the mediation of Henry IV. of France *, to whoſe Ambaſſador the two Eccleſiaſtics were delivered, whilſt his Holineſs recalled the cenſures he had inflicted.

Upon this occaſion, many elaborate performances were produced, concerning the nature and boundaries of civil and eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction, which ſerved to open the eyes of Princes and Magiſtrates, and diffuſed notions very unfavourable to the pretenſions of Papacy. The matter was conſidered as a common cauſe, in which all the Sovereign States of Italy were intereſted; the Dukes of Modena, Savoy and Urbina, were ſo rouſed as even to offer a conſiderable ſuccour of men and money for ſupporting a war againſt the Pope; and from that time the Court of Rome loſt much of its credit and influence with the Venetian Republic, which it has never been able to recover. But the Roman Pontifs were extremely ſollicitous to maintain their pretended privileges, and employed the moſt able pens

* Du Pin's Eccleſ. Hiſt. Vol. IV. p. 175.

pens to aſſert and defend them. Among theſe, Cardinal *Bellarmine* diſtinguiſhed himſelf in his zeal for the Romiſh Church. And though he ſeemed to admit but an indirect power in the Pope with reſpect to temporals, and did not go all the length which ſome others did, yet he drew the ſame kind of conſequences, and affirmed that Heretical Princes, or ſuch as rebelled againſt the Church, might be depoſed, and forfeit their civil rights.

The Portugueſe did not act with the ſame vigour and wiſdom which had diſtinguiſhed the noble Venetians.

When about the year 1640, they had thrown off the yoke of Spaniſh tyranny and oppreſſion, and elected for King, Don John, Duke of Braganza, the Roman Pontifs obſtinately refuſed to recognize his title, or to confirm the Biſhops which he had promoted to the vacant Sees. Several European Princes adviſed him to imitate the example of the Venetian Senate, and to act independently of the Holy Father. Neither was he wholly averſe to ſuch a reſolute meaſure; but the extravagant ſuperſtition of the people, and the terrors of the Inquiſitorial Tribunal, damped his ſpirit, and prevented the enterprize. Hence it came to paſs, that the Popes of Rome continued to inſult the court of Portugal till the year 1666, when an accommodation was brought about under Clement IX. after a treaty of peace had been concluded between the Spaniards and Portugueſe, in conſequence of a deciſive victory which the latter had obtained at Villa Vicioſa over Philip IV. who renounced all pretenſions to the Crown of Portugal.

During the courſe of this century, many differences likewiſe aroſe between the French Monarchs and the Roman Pontifs; and indeed for a long time before this period, the liberties and privileges of

of the Gallican church were a conſtant object of envy and uneaſineſs to the Popes of Rome.

Whilſt the Jeſuits exerted all their art and dexterity in ſupporting the power and pretenſions of the Romiſh See, the Parliament of Paris boldly ſtood forth in behalf of the Gallican church, and on various occaſions diſconcerted the deſigns and humbled the arrogance of Pontifical pride. The French indeed maintain the religious ſyſtem of Popery, and their oppoſition is chiefly directed againſt the perſonal infallibility of the Roman Pontifs, their overgrown power and ambition, their interfering with the rights of Princes, and encroaching upon temporal matters. At ſame time, they lay it down as a maxim in all their differences with the See of Rome, to proceed with mildneſs and moderation, though this is contrary to the characteriſtic of their national temper in other matters, which inclines them to clamour and noiſe, and impetuoſity of action.

In their negotiations with his Holineſs, they affect a kind of veneration, and ſhow an obſequiouſneſs in ſmaller points, with a view to obtain, in a ſilent and eaſy but yet effectual manner, more ſubſtantial advantages. This led that celebrated author Voltaire, to remark with his uſual vivacity, That the French Monarch kiſſes the Pope's toe, but takes care to tie up his hands.

The Church of Rome, notwithſtanding its boaſted uniformity of doctrine, has always been divided by a multiplicity of religious opinions and controverſies. Thoſe concerning grace, predeſtination, human liberty, and original ſin, were now revived, and carried to a great height, and were occaſioned by a book wrote by Lewis Molina a Spaniſh Jeſuit. The opinions of this Divine were, That God Almighty does not predeſtinate men to eternal happineſs,

neſs, but in view and conſideration of their good works: That the grace of God operates in conjunction with free will: That men have it in their power to comply with or to reſiſt Divine grace; and that this grace is not denied to any.

He introduced a new kind of hypotheſis, in order to ſhew the conſiſtency of Divine influence with free agency, and to reconcile the jarring notions of the Auguſtinians, Semi-Pelagians, Thomiſts, and other Polemical Divines.

Theſe doctrines were fiercely attacked by the Dominicans; they were for ſome time agitated in the ſchools, then carried to the tribunal of Inquiſition, and afterwards referred by the Archbiſhop of *Toledo* to the Pope himſelf. Many conferences and warm debates took place with regard to theſe intricate ſubjects: And upon various occaſions, from the year 1594 to 1625, decrees were paſſed impoſing ſilence and prohibiting any publications on theſe nice and controverted articles. But this did not produce the deſired effect; the flame increaſed, a number of treatiſes were ſent abroad into the world, and many diſputants appeared in the field of controverſy.

Freſh fuel was added by the publication of a book entitled Auguſtinus, about the year 1640. It was compoſed by Cornelius Janſenius Biſhop of Ypres, who revived the doctrine of Auguſtine concerning the virtue and extent of Chriſt's death, the corruption of mankind, and the nature and efficacy of divine grace, which approached nearly to the opinions of Calvin. Great numbers embraced this ſyſtem, and the Dominicans in particular became violent Partizans for it. On the other hand, the whole order of Jeſuits oppoſed it with the utmoſt vehemence, as contrary to their ſcheme of doctrine, and becauſe it was patronized by the Dominicans

Dominicans, to whom they bore an implacable enmity. Not content with expoſing it by argument and writing, they employed their intereſt at Rome to obtain from the Pope a ſolemn condemnation of Janſenius's book. In this they were not unſucceſsful, and Urban VIII. iſſued a bull declaring it infected with ſeveral errors. Janſeniſm, however, ſpread and prevailed in many places, particularly in France and the Netherlands, created warm conteſts and much diſturbance. The Jeſuits, not ſatisfied with the victory they had obtained, did, in the year 1653, ſingle out five propoſitions from the works of Janſenius which appeared to them moſt erroneous, and prevailed on Innocent X. formally to condemn them. Theſe contained the following articles: That there are ſome of the divine commands, which the righteous are unable to obey, nor does God grant them that degree of grace which may enable them to yield ſuch obedience; that no perſon can reſiſt the influence of divine grace; that to merit and demerit in the preſent ſtate of lapſed nature, it is not requiſite that man ſhould enjoy a freedom from neceſſity, but from conſtraint; that the Semi-Pelagians err in maintaining, that the human will may either receive or reſiſt the energy of preventing grace; that to ſay that Jeſus Chriſt ſhed his blood for all mankind without exception, is Semi-Pelagianiſm.

Hereupon the followers of Janſenius alledged that theſe propoſitions were not to be found in his book, or at leaſt, not in the ſenſe in which they had been condemned. The Janſeniſts affect ſingular auſterity in their manner of living, obſerve a rigorous diſcipline, exclaim againſt the corruptions of the Church and the licentiouſneſs of the Clergy. They maintain that the ſcriptures and liturgies ſhould be offered to the people in their mother-tongue

tongue, and that religion does not conſiſt in external rites and obſervances, but inward holineſs and divine love. At ſame time, they are chargeable with many faults and falſe notions reſembling thoſe of the Myſtics, lay a great ſtreſs upon bodily penance, and look upon ſuch who have by maceration and abſtemiouſneſs haſtened their death, as ſo many noble victims to religion, by which they atone for their own ſins, and derive bleſſings to others. Of much the ſame ſtamp were the Quietiſts, Pietiſts, and other fanatical ſects, who pretended to be wiſe above what was written, and took upon them to preſcribe rules and laws, which are not commanded in the word of God. Perhaps they may have had a good intention, and ſome among them may have been carried to ſublime heights of devotion, while amidſt their extatic ardors and ſeraphic contemplations, they loſt ſight of the active duties of religion, were tinged with enthuſiaſtical notions, and recommended a regimen of life inconſiſtent with humanity, the preſent ſtate of the world, and the genuine ſyſtem of goſpel-truth taken in its whole extent.

Among the Proteſtants various controverſies of a religious nature likewiſe ſubſiſted, which attracted the attention of the world, and employed many able diſputants. The academy of Geneva had flouriſhed for a conſiderable time, and ſuch were its luſtre and reputation, that ſtudents of theology in a ſpecial manner reſorted to it from all the reformed countries. Hence it happened, by means extremely natural, that the doctrines of Calvin reſpecting the decrees of God and divine grace gradually gained ground. Yet even among the Calviniſts themſelves, ſome were of opinion, that God did only permit Adam's fall and the commiſſion of ſin, without ſuppoſing any poſitive decree; whilſt others

others maintained that the tranſgreſſion of Adam was abſolutely decreed, and that it was impoſſible for him to avoid it. Theſe who aſſerted the latter were denominated Supralapſarians, whilſt the other were deſigned Sublapſarians.

About the year 1605, James Arminius, Profeſſor of Divinity in the univerſity of Leyden, openly rejected and endeavoured to refute the opinions of Calvin with reſpect to election and reprobation, juſtification, grace, and perſeverance; and with the Lutherans maintained, that God Almighty had excluded none from ſalvation by any poſitive abſolute decree, and that grace was free to all. Though Arminius himſelf died in the year 1609, yet the tenets he taught had a very wide ſpread, and were adopted by great multitudes, as in their apprehenſion more honourable for the Deity, and more agreeable to the ideas of Divine juſtice and goodneſs, as well as to the ſcope of the goſpel. But Francis Gomar, colleague of Arminius, and many learned Doctors in the Dutch univerſities, oppoſed theſe notions with the higheſt zeal. Theſe matters ſoon became general and intereſting, great numbers embarked on both ſides, the flame of controverſy ſpread all around, long and litigious debates enſued, and theſe were ſometimes followed by civil commotions and popular tumults.

The celebrated Grotius, and ſeveral others of weight an influence, warmly recommended toleration and forbearance, as the Belgic Confeſſion of Faith had determined nothing poſitively upon the points in debate. With a view to an accommodation, various conferences were held between the contending parties, one particularly at the Hague in the year 1611, another at Delft in 1613: And, in the year 1614, the States of Hollond iſſued out

a

a pacific edict injoining mutual charity and friendſhip.

The Calviniſts, however, became daily more apprehenſive of the Arminians, nor could continue ſilent, when they imagined religion was in danger.

Neither did the Arminians conduct themſelves with that prudence and circumſpection that might invite to peace. They were even ſuſpected of leaning to and inculcating the errors of Socinianiſm and Pelagianiſm; and in fact a toleration had been offered them in the year 1611, provided they would renounce ſuch tenets *. Maurice Prince of Orange appeared openly againſt them, and ſome of the leading men who patronized them were ſeverely puniſhed. Oldenbarneveldt, venerable for wiſdom and age, loſt his life upon a ſcaffold; Grotius and Hoogerbeets were condemned to perpetual impriſonment. They had indeed oppoſed the Prince in ſome ambitious projects, which they thought inconſiſtent with the liberties of their country; but whether he took revenge from political or religious motives, or if he was influenced by both, is not ſo evident.

In this ſituation of affairs, the States-General, in conjunction with the Prince of Orange, judged it proper, that matters of a purely theological nature ſhould be determined by an Eccleſiaſtical court. Accordingly, the famous Synod of Dort was aſſembled in May 1618, continued till the month of May the year following, and conſiſted of 154 ſeſſions. This general Council was compoſed of Proteſtant Divines, not only from the United Provinces, but alſo from England, Scotland, the States of Brandenburgh, Switzerland, Geneva, the Palatinate, Bremen and Embden.

* Dr Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. Vol. V. p. 6. *Vide* Note added by his Engliſh Tranſlator.

The moſt diſtinguiſhed among the Arminians for learning and eloquence, made their appearance before this illuſtrious aſſembly. Simon Epiſcopius Profeſſor of Divinity at Leyden, did in their name propoſe firſt of all to refute the opinions of the Calviniſts, and then proceed to a more direct defence of their cauſe. This they thought extremely material, from which they could not depart. But this propoſal was rejected by the Synod; and as the Arminians were charged with hereſy, they were called upon to prove and defend their own opinions before they attacked thoſe of others. Many arguments were uſed to perſuade them to a compliance with this form of procedure, but without effect. Hereupon they were excluded from the aſſembly, and returned home, not without the loudeſt complaints of rigour and injuſtice, which they thought they had undeſervedly met with.

Nevertheleſs, their doctrines were examined in their abſence, and condemned as heretical. In conſequence of this, they themſelves were excommunicated, their miniſters depoſed, and their aſſemblies ſuppreſſed.

Among other things the Synod of Dort decided, in direct oppoſition to the Arminians, That predeſtination was to be conſidered as prior to any foreſight of merit or demerit in the creature; that Jeſus Chriſt had not by his death procured grace for all; that by the Fall, Man had loſt the liberty of well-doing; that grace was efficacious of itſelf; and that ſuch as are predeſtinated to eternal life cannot fall from the faith.

The Proteſtant Miniſters in France, though they ſent no deputies to this convocation, as the King had prohibited them, yet in a national Synod held at Alez in France in 1619, they approved their deciſions.

Not-

Notwithſtanding this triumph obtained over the Arminians, yet were their opinions highly reliſhed and well received in many places. They found an aſylum in the Dutchy of Sleſwick, under Frederic Duke of Holſtein. Some of them took refuge in France and the Spaniſh Netherlands. Afterwards, under the mild ſhade of toleration, they erected churches in ſeveral places, they founded a college at Amſterdam, and they maintained their cauſe with ſuch ſucceſs, that they now have in the United Provinces 34 congregations, which are provided with 84 Miniſters. Arminianiſm met with a kind reception in other countries, particularly in England, through the countenance of Archbiſhop *Laud*, and ſtill keeps its ground, though it has been variouſly modelled, agreeable to the peculiar notions and views of its teachers. Indeed they admit Latitudinarian principles on many occaſions, and would widen the bonds of communion to ſuch a degree, as to receive Chriſtians of every denomination, Papiſts excepted. They lay it down as a principle, That the doctrines neceſſary to be believed as eſſential to ſalvation are very few, and that every one ought to be left at liberty with reſpect to their private opinions, provided they conform their conduct to the laws of the goſpel.

Yet has the progreſs of Arminianiſm been conſiderably retarded in Germany and Switzerland, in conſequence of the Leibnitian philoſophy, which is there cultivated with much care. Leibnitz and Wolf attack ſome principles which are the foundation of the Arminian ſcheme, whilſt they give a ſoftning to, and gild with a pleaſing luſtre thoſe that prove a ſupport to the Calviniſtical doctrine. They deny a liberty of indifference by which men may act or not, with, or without, or againſt motives. They aſſert a phyſical or mechanical neceſſity which regulates

gulates the material world according to certain fixed laws, and a ſpiritual and moral neceſſity by which rational and intelligent beings are actuated. They conſider the univerſe as one grand ſyſtem, created and governed in ſuch a manner, ſo as to anſwer the original idea and deſign of Deity: That partial evil may iſſue in general good; that the perfection of the *whole* does reſult from numberleſs inferior combinations and contraſts apparently irregular; and that this will be the illuſtrious event and eſtabliſhment of things, at the concluſion of the grand drama of nature, in the ultimate and glorious arrangement of the works of God.

With this view are all things wiſely ordered and conducted. Predeſtination itſelf is a pre-determination to promote the important purpoſes of Providence. Perſeverance is produced by a prepollency of motives; the power of grace proves efficacious, by an irreſiſtible energy of moral ſwaſion; and a ſeries of moral effects ariſes in the intelligent world by moral means, with the ſame certainty, but without fatality, as natural effects are produced by a train of natural cauſes in the inanimate ſyſtem. In ſome ſuch manner do many German Divines argue, and thus endeavour by the aids of philoſophy to illuſtrate the doctrine which they eſpouſe, and to clear away the difficulties objected to it.

The multiplicity of ſects and the ſubdiviſion of parties among the Proteſtants, was a matter of ſincere regret to good and diſpaſſionate men. Various and vigorous attemps were made to heal theſe breaches, to remove diſcord and animoſity, and in a particular manner to accompliſh an union between the Lutheran and the other Reformed Churches Many eminent Divines and other perſons of diſtinction on both ſides, endeavoured with a laudable temper to effectuate ſo ſalutary and pacific a meaſure.

ſure. They conſidered that great allowances were to be made for the force of education, the influence of human paſſions and prejudices, that mutual charity and forbearance were Chriſtian duties, that the intereſt of their common cauſe would be much ſtrengthened by a coalition, that the points in debate were not eſſential to true religion, and that the fundamental doctrines of the goſpel were profeſſed in both communions. In the year 1615, James I. King of Great Britain, made an effort to bring about this deſirable end, but without ſucceſs. In the Synod of Charenton, held in the year 1631, the Reformed Divines diſcovered a liberal and brotherly ſpirit, and declared to the world that the Lutheran ſyſtem was not infected with fundamental errors, and was in the main conformable to the genius of Chriſtianity. But the ſtiff and rigid Lutherans did not pay the ſame compliment to their diſſenting brethren, and even reproached them with unbecoming vehemence. Soon after this, a friendly conference took place at Leipſic, where matters were conducted with more moderation, but without that fraternal confidence and affection, which alone could preſage or ſecure a good underſtanding.

In the year 1661, another conference was held at Caſſel, by appointment of William VI. Landgrave of Heſſe. And although each of the contending parties ſhewed a great deal of candour, and a larger ſhare of a tolerating and charitable ſpirit than formerly, yet could they not infuſe theſe generous ſentiments into the minds of others, and the Lutheran party in particular tenaciouſly adhered to their religious peculiarities.

John Dureus, a native of Scotland, a perſon highly eſteemed on account of his profound learning and exalted piety, laboured with ardent and unwearied

unwearied zeal for the ſpace of 40 years to remove differences, and to accompliſh an agreement among the Proteſtant churches.

He wrote, exhorted and intreated; he underwent innumerable toils and ſufferings; he travelled through moſt of the reformed countries, and warmly addreſſed Princes and Magiſtrates, to perſuade them to promote ſo ſalutary a deſign. All admired his benevolence and activity, but few entered entirely into his views, or ſeconded his generous attempts; nay there were not wanting ſome of a narrow and ſuſpicious turn, who endeavoured to miſrepreſent his intentions, as well as to defeat his ſchemes, which at laſt proved abortive.

I would now obſerve that the ſplendor and majeſty of the Church of Rome were much obſcured by the radiant light and glory of the Reformation. That remarkable Revolution which announced liberty, joy, and felicity to many nations, proved diſtreſsful and diſaſtrous to the Roman Pontifs, and left them involved in ignominy and diſappointment. In this declining ſtate of affairs, they naturally looked round with a wiſhful eye, deſirous of aid, and projected every meaſure that could be thought of, in order to repair the loſſes they had ſuſtained, and to ſupport their tottering throne. Nothing appeared more proper and promiſing than an attempt to enlarge the limits of their power and juriſdiction in foreign parts, and thus to obtain an equivalent for what may have been forfeited at home.

With this view the famous "Congregation for "the Propagation of the Faith," was founded at Rome in the year 1622, by Gregory XV.

It conſiſts of 13 Cardinals, two Prieſts, one Monk, and a Secretary, is enriched with ample revenues, dignified with very extenſive powers and privileges, and has a magnificent palace appropriated

ated to it, in one of the moſt delicious ſpots at Rome *.

The grand deſign of this inſtitution is, to propagate the Romiſh Faith in all the kingdoms and countries of the known world, to ſend miſſionaries abroad into every quarter of the globe from time to time to make proſelytes; to publiſh the ſacred writings and other pious performances in different languages, and to diſtribute them in diſtant places. By this Congregation great numbers of foreigners are educated and ſupported, who reſort to Rome for religious inſtruction, and charitable foundations are eſtabliſhed for the accommodation of ſuch as have ſuffered baniſhment or other grievous misfortunes, on account of a zealous attachment to Papacy.

In the year 1627, Urban VIII. likewiſe founded another College for propagating the faith, which is placed under the direction of the former one. It is properly ſet apart as a ſeminary for the education of thoſe who are deſtined for foreign miſſions, and where they are carefully inſtructed in all languages and ſciences, till they are qualified for going abroad. This foundation was begun by John Baptiſt Viles, a Spaniſh nobleman, who bequeathed for this pious purpoſe all his opulent eſtate, and his ſplendid palace at Rome.

All this ſet an example, which was ſoon imitated in ſeveral Popiſh countries, particularly in France, where aſſociations were formed and ſocieties eſtabliſhed upon a ſimilar plan, for furniſhing regular ſupplies of Eccleſiaſtics, who, upon a call from the congregation

* Beſides this College "De Propaganda Fide," there are 14 other Congregations at Rome, erected for ſpiritual, and ſix for temporal affairs, who divide and ſhare as it were the Papal power, and ſometimes tranſact matters without the Pope's knowledge or conſent. *Vide* Dr Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. in Engliſh, Vol. III. p. 420, *&c.*

congregation at Rome, ſhould be ready to go and convert diſtant nations.

Thus multitudes of miſſionaries ſwarmed over the face of the earth, among whom the Jeſuits, the Franciſcans, Dominicans, Capuchins and Carmelites made the greateſt figure. Theſe ſpread the name of Chriſtianity through the greateſt part of Aſia, during the courſe of this century, and converted ſome of the moſt barbarous nations to the profeſſion, if not to the ſpirit of the Goſpel. Their labours in India were inceſſant, and they were crowned with conſiderable ſucceſs. Madura, and the extenſive kingdoms of Siam, Tong-king, and Kochin-china received the light of the Goſpel. Among other ſtratagems deviſed to gain upon the people of Madura, Robert de Nobili, an Italian Jeſuit, aſſumed the appearance and character of a Brachman, who had come from ſome of the northern regions.* He beſmeared his countenance, practiſed painful auſterities, and impoſed on the credulity of the ſimple inhabitants, who look on the order of Brachmans as deſcended from the gods. He converted to Chriſtianity, twelve of the more diſtinguiſhed Brachmans, who had a prodigious influence over the people.

Afterwards ſeveral other fictitious Brachmans were added, who boldly denied their being Europeans; and when upon ſome occaſion Nobili was ſuſpected, he forged a deed in the ancient Indian characters, to ſhew that the Brachmans of Rome were of a much older date than thoſe of India, that they were deſcended from the God Brama, and that he himſelf derived his origin from this celeſtial ſtock. In the year 1663, four French Biſhops were ſent into India. Theſe were ſucceeded by a ſolemn embaſſy from Lewis XIV. in the year 1684.

* Jouvenci Hiſtoire des Jeſuites.

1684, to the King of Siam, with a view to engage this Pagan Prince to abandon the idolatry of his anceſtors, to embrace Chriſtianity, and to permit the propagation of it in his dominions. Accordingly a church was erected at Siam by the King's expreſs conſent; a reſidence there was allowed to the miſſionaries, as alſo a ſeminary for inſtructing youth in the languages of the neighbouring nations. But theſe promiſing proſpects were in a few years blaſted by a revolution of affairs, when both the King and his prime miniſter were put to death.

Soon after the commencement of this century, the Romiſh religion made a very rapid progreſs in Japan. The miſſionaries ſent thither, obſerving the neglect and cruelty which the Bonzas or Japaneſe Prieſts ſhewed towards perſons in poverty and ſickneſs, whom they ignorantly repreſented as objects of diſpleaſure to the gods, endeavoured to render themſelves extremely popular by all the gentle arts of humanity and beneficence. They likewiſe availed themſelves of another circumſtance which proved very advantageous to their cauſe. This was founded upon a kind of analogy or reſemblance between the Romiſh religion and that of Japan, in a variety of things. They expected the favour of heaven through the mediation of certain deities who had voluntarily ſubmitted to death. They implored the interceſſion and good offices of ſome departed ſpirits whom they dignified with ſpecial power and preferment *. In their ſuperſtitious worſhip they uſed tapers and perfumes, proceſſions and ſtatues, they prayed for the dead, and founded convents for both ſexes, who devoted themſelves to ſolitude, abſtinence and celibacy. All this was no bad preparation for Popery, and the moſt ſanguine

* Modern Univerſ. Hiſt. vol. 9. p. 23, 24

guine hopes were conceived of its growth and continuance in this country. Theſe, however, were ſoon diſperſed. Inteſtine quarrels and violent contentions ſprang up among thoſe who ought to have been united in the firmeſt bonds both of religion and intereſt. The Auguſtinians, Dominicans and Franciſcans, viewed the Jeſuits with an eye of envy and jealouſy. Mutual miſunderſtanding, diſcord and diſſention prevailed among all theſe orders, which proved highly detrimental to the common cauſe: And in the year 1615, this received a mortal blow, which occaſioned the total overthrow of Chriſtianity in Japan. Then it was that a bloody edict was iſſued out by the Emperor againſt all the teachers and profeſſors of the Goſpel, which was executed with unimaginable barbarity, and raged for many years, till the name of Chriſtian was extirpated in that mighty empire. Vaſt numbers of the Japaneſe Chriſtians, as likewiſe many of the miſſionaries expired with amazing magnanimity and patience, amidſt the moſt excruciating torments.

The particular cauſes of this cruel perſecution are not ſo evidently known, though various conjectures have been formed. The Jeſuits, Dominicans and Franciſcans accuſe each other; and ſometimes the Engliſh and Dutch are blamed as having inſpired the Emperor of Japan who was naturally jealous, with prejudices againſt the Roman Pontifs, that they might engroſs to themſelves all the trade of that extenſive kingdom. Moſt hiſtorians make mention of certain ſeditious letters intercepted by the Dutch, which alarmed the Emperor with an apprehenſion, that a deſign was formed by the Jeſuits, of exciting a rebellion and reducing his kingdom under the government of Spain and Portugal.

In

In China matters wore a more agreeable aſpect. This immenſe and opulent region was a great object of Papal ambition, and in order to obtain ſo rich a prize, numerous tribes of miſſionaries were poured into it. The Jeſuits in a more eminent degree boaſt of their ſignal and diſtinguiſhing exploits, and of the wonderful ſucceſs which crowned their indefatigable labours. They, with ſingular attention, ſtudied the character, the temper, taſte and manners of the Chineſe, and with an obſequiouſneſs more artful than honeſt, endeavoured to adapt themſelves accordingly upon all occaſions. Even in matters of religion they made moſt diſhonourable conceſſions, and by a ſtrain of complaiſance utterly unjuſtifiable, admitted among the doctrines and inſtitutions of the Goſpel, ſome of the profane notions and uſages of Chineſe idolatry. By their indulgence and dexterity, they roſe in proceſs of time to a ſummit of grandeur, and to a degree of confidence with the Emperors of that country, which was ſurpriſing to themſelves, and aſtoniſhing to all around. They were advanced to the higheſt offices of ſtate, employed in the moſt important negotiations, and careſſed as friends and favourites. Under their ſway and management the Romiſh religion flouriſhed in China, and what compleated their triumph was an edict which the Emperor iſſued in the year 1692. By this, all his ſubjects were permitted to embrace the Goſpel, at ſame time it was therein declared that the Chriſtian religion was nowiſe prejudicial to his government. And in the year 1700, a magnificent temple was erected for the Jeſuits within the precincts of the imperial palace *.

It muſt be acknowledged, that the Jeſuits were chiefly inſtrumental in ſpreading religion and obtaining

* Du Halde Deſcription de la, Chine, Tom. III, p. 128, 129.

taining ſo much countenance and favour for it. But the meaſures they purſued appear evidently inconſiſtent with the honour and integrity of the ſacred function, as alſo with the truth and dignity of the Goſpel. Their conduct and diſingenuous behaviour gave great offence to many of their fellow miſſionaries, and even to the Roman Pontifs themſelves. The Dominicans and Franciſcans arraigned them before the tribunal of his Holineſs, in the year 1645; and this matter has been the ſubject of long and vehement diſpute in the Church of Rome. The Jeſuits in China are accuſed of tolerating an impure and impious mixture of Divine truth and Pagan error, and of blending Chineſe ſuperſtition with the ſacred religion of Jeſus. They are repreſented as making little difference between the *Tien* and *Shang-Ti* of the Chineſe, which in their language ſignify the heavens, and the true and living God; or between the theology of Confucius, and the Goſpel of Chriſt. They allow the Chineſe to retain many of their ſuperſtitious rites and ceremonies, and to pay public honours before the ſtatue of Confucius in a temple dedicated to his memory. They pretend indeed that theſe are but political inſtitutions and civil ceremonies, but they carry all the marks of religious homage and worſhip, and are in ſubſtance the ſame with what are obſerved towards their profeſſed deities. They are ſuch as theſe, libations of wine, and blood, an offering of fruits, faſting, kneeling, praying, and proſtration of the body; the chief Mandarine performs the functions of the Prieſt, preſides at the ſolemnity, and diſmiſſes the people with a bleſſing.

The Jeſuits are further accuſed as teaching a corrupt ſyſtem of morality, as graſping at worldly honours, as carrying on a conſtant and extenſive traffic like a body of merchants, as amaſſing wealth with

with the utmoſt avidity *, as deeply involved in civil affairs, and factious cabals, as exciting inteſtine commotions and civil wars wherever their projects of ambition are diſconcerted, and as even refractory to the orders of the Roman Pontifs, and to the Vicars and Legates commiſſioned by them. From theſe heavy charges the Jeſuitical order with all their ſubtilty and chicane found it no eaſy matter to vindicate themſelves; and though they frequently attempted it, and were not deficient in retorting upon their adverſaries with virulence and vivacity, yet the impartial world could not be ſatisfied, conſidering the flagrant proofs of guilt produced againſt them †.

A vaſt multitude of Popiſh miſſionaries were likewiſe ſent over to America. And there too the conduct of the Jeſuits was of a ſimilar nature with what has been juſt now deſcribed. Some of the Roman Catholic clergy are ſaid to ſurpaſs the idolatrous natives both in the licentiouſneſs of their manners and in the ſuperſtitious rites which they profanely perform. But the Jeſuitical order takes the lead, ſollicitous as it would ſeem, not ſo much to make converts to true Chriſtianity, as to uſurp dominion, acquire wealth, and indulge to pleaſure. In order to civilize the wild and vagrant Indians, they have in ſeveral provinces, both in North and South America, founded cities, enacted laws, and eſtabliſhed ſome ſuch ſort of government as prevails

* The Jeſuit miſſionaries abroad, do often vie with grandees of the firſt quality, in luxury of living, magnificence and equipage, and yet become rich enough to return home and purchaſe biſhopricks.

† My plan obliges me very much to abridge this curious controverſy about the worſhip of the Chineſe, and the behaviour of the Jeſuits. Beſides other books, I refer the reader to Dr Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. Eng. by Dr Maclain, vol. IV. p. 220. to 227.

vails in European ſtates. They themſelves preſide in the adminiſtration, and ſuſtain the twofold character of prieſts and magiſtrates. This gives them a manifeſt ſuperiority and a kind of irreſiſtible influence, which they carefully improve to their own great emolument. Their ſway is moſt unlimited in the internal and leſs acceſſible provinces of America, from whence it is reported, that they annually remit to Europe aſtoniſhing quantities of gold, but chiefly from Paraguay, of which they appeared to aſſume an excluſive poſſeſſion *.

Here it was that the diſciples of Loyola erected for themſelves an independant republic, under the maſk of Religion. But this was little regarded; hypocrites inſtead of converts were multiplied, and this oftentimes through fear or force. Baptiſm was all of Chriſtianity which moſt of the Indians could pretend to, whilſt their attention was called off to matters of a different nature. They were inſtructed in the art of war, inured to arms, and taught to conſider the Jeſuits as their ſovereigns, nay, as certain deities, alſo to look on all other white people as demoniacs and implacable enemies. One fundamental law of this eſtabliſhment was, to admit neither a Spaniard or Portugueſe, no biſhop or governor within this new dominion, ſo that all the projects and exploits of the Jeſuits might continue an impenetrable ſecret. Many accuſations were ſent home againſt them, which, at laſt, awakened the Courts of Madrid and Liſbon. So late as in the year 1752, when the united forces of Spain and Portugal marched towards that country, in order to make an exchange of ſome lands, agreeable to a treaty entered into for aſcertaining the

* La Plata or Paraguay, is a vaſt region in South America, 1500 miles in length and 1000 miles in breadth, and [illegible] of the moſt fruitful countries in the world.

the limits of their reſpective territories in South America, the Jeſuits animated the Indians and kindled a war, which fully opened the eyes of the world; and theſe rebellious proceedings contributed, with other cauſes, to precipitate their downfal and ſuppreſſion, as formerly noticed.

The northern parts of Africa that lye toward the Mediterranean ſea, were once adorned with many flouriſhing Chriſtian churches. Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, Auguſtine, Fulgentius, and other Fathers of the primitive Church lived in theſe bounds. There, many famous Councils were aſſembled to regulate the affairs of the Chriſtian Church. But now—all theſe places once ſhining and glorious, are ſadly over-run with Mahometaniſm.

The interior parts of that great peninſula are ſtill involved in the darkneſs of Paganiſm. Some of the maritime provinces have been brought over by the church of Rome to the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, though in a very imperfect degree.

The Capuchins were principally employed in the African miſſions, in diſcharging of which they underwent incredible hazards and hardſhips. Their endeavours were attended with ſome ſucceſs; the Kings of Benin and Awerri embraced the Goſpel, as did alſo that heroic Princeſs, Anna Zingha, Queen of Metamba, and all her ſubjects, in the year 1652.

There are, however, few Chriſtian churches to be found in Africa, except in the country of Abyſſinia, called the empire of Preſter-John, containing the great and higher Ethiopia, which extends 1500 miles in length, and to about the half of this in breadth.

A tradition prevails among the inhabitants, that the Queen of Sheba, who went to viſit King Solomon,

mon, was Empreſs in this country. Many attribute their firſt converſion to Chriſtianity, to the Ethiopian eunuch, prime miniſter of their Queen Candace, mentioned in the Acts of the Apoſtles *.

Ruffinus relates, that Athanaſius, Biſhop of Alexandria ſent Frumentius thither, though called by the general name of India, which was uſual among the Romans. There, in the fourth century, he, by his unwearied labours, converted an incredible number of people to the Chriſtian Faith.

Ruffinus ſays, he had this account from Edeſius a preſbyter at Tyre, the companion of Frumentius.

The Abyſſinians are extremely rigid in their faſts, and ſuch among them as betake themſelves to a Monaſtic life, aſſemble at ſtated hours and frequently at midnight for the purpoſes of devotion. Their monaſtries are more like villages than convents, every Monk having a diſtinct dwelling-houſe, and as much adjacent land aſſigned to him, as a man is able to cultivate. The moſt famous of the Ethiopian monaſtries is that of Allelujah, where formerly there are ſaid to have been 40,000 Monks, who poſſeſſed the whole circumjacent country as neceſſary for maintenance. They have few books among them but the Bible, the Canons of the Firſt Councils, and Lives of their Saints.

They hold the Scriptures to be the perfect rule of Chriſtian faith. They uſe circumciſion as well as baptiſm, and perform divine offices in their vulgar tongue with extraordinary devotion. They always take off their ſhoes when they enter into church, and never ſit down in it unleſs upon the ground. They expreſs a deep ſenſe of religion upon many occaſions, and are very ready to viſit the ſick and diſeaſed. They allow the Biſhop of

* The Acts of the Apoſtles ch. viii. ver. 27 to 40.

of Rome to be the Firſt Patriarch, but condemn his pretended ſupremacy over the whole church as Antichriſtian. The Roman Pontifs made various attempts to ſubject the Abyſſinians to their ghoſtly dominion, but all in vain.

In the year 1554, Ignatius Loyola, founder of the order of Jeſuits, begged of the Pope permiſſion to go in perſon to Ethiopia for that end. This being declined for ſeveral reaſons, a very ſplendid miſſion of Friars of his order was ſent thither. The miſſionaries were admitted to an audience of the Emperor Claudius with abundance of ceremony, but he and his people continued ſtedfaſt in their former faith, and differing but little from the Copts in Egypt, acknowledge the Patriarch of Alexandria as their ſpiritual chief.

About the commencement of the 17th century, a freſh effort was made by the Portugueſe Jeſuits in that part of the world. They at laſt, by their artifice and eloquence, prevailed on the Emperor Seltam Segued to embrace the Catholic faith, in the year 1626.

He, with a view to ingratiate himſelf with Portugal, promoted Alphonſo Mendez, a miſſionary of that nation, to the higheſt rank, and conſtituted him head of the Abyſſinian church. But this imprudent patriarch, elated with pride, and hurried on by intemperate zeal, did, by his cruelty and deſpotiſm defeat his own end, and ſoon ſubverted the Roman intereſt in that country. He employed the tortures of the Inquiſition to convert the Abyſſinians, who were moſt zealouſly attached to their ancient religion, and as if that had been heatheniſm itſelf, he re-baptized thoſe who were gained over to the Catholic faith. He, by his intrigues and cabals, excited tumults and conſpiracies in the ſtate, and in a moſt inſolent manner encroached upon the

prerogatives of the Prince. This expoſed him and his cauſe to univerſal odium, and at length a ſolemn declaration was iſſued from the throne, abrogating all former edicts in favour of the Popiſh religion. When Baſilides, ſon of Segued, ſucceeded as Emperor, he, in the year 1634, baniſhed Mendez and all the Jeſuits from the Ethiopian territories. From that period to the preſent one, the name of Rome is hateful to the Abyſſinians; they guard their frontiers to prevent the admiſſion of any Catholic miſſionaries, * and deteſt Popery to ſuch a degree, that, of the two, they would rather turn Mahometans than Papiſts.

The zeal which Catholic countries diſplayed in propagating Chriſtianity, excited a pious emulation in Proteſtant ſtates to imitate ſo laudable an example, and in a much better cauſe. The Lutherans projected various ſchemes of this nature with an honeſt intention, but found the execution of them incumbered with inſuperable difficulties, eſpecially as very few of the Princes of that perſuaſion had either territories or colonies beyond the limits of Europe. This was not the caſe with reſpect to other reformed kingdoms, particularly the Engliſh and Dutch, whoſe ſettlements are ſo extenſive in America, Aſia, and Africa. It muſt be acknowledged that the grand objects in view are the enlargement of trade and commerce, the acquiſition of foreign countries, the increaſe of wealth, power and importance; yet ought not Religion by any means to be neglected. Neither, in fact, has it been

* La Croze, Hiſtoire du Chriſtianiſme de l' Ethiope' p. 79, 80.

I muſt remark that the Abyſſinians made a very late diſcovery of their irreconcileable averſion to the Church of Rome, upon a recent attempt made upon them by the Pope, which met with a very ſevere reception, as appears by public letters from Madrid, dated June 30th 1720.

been diſregarded. Conſiderable attention has been paid in Proteſtant ſtates to the propagation of the Goſpel in foreign parts, reſpectable ſocieties have been formed for this expreſs purpoſe, many miſſionaries have been employed and ſupported by them, the Holy Scriptures have been tranſlated into different languages, publiſhed and diſtributed by them, their labours have been crowned with conſiderable ſucceſs, frequent and numerous emigrations of well-inſtructed people have contributed to ſecond their religious endeavours; and in many countries, particularly in America, are reformed churches eſtabliſhed, which enjoy the light of the Goſpel in purity, and ſome of our Colonies are comfortably ſupplied with Proteſtant miniſters. It is indeed no eaſy matter to poliſh and inſtruct the ſavage and roving Indians, yet, in the year 1633, Elliot, who has been denominated by ſome the apoſtle of the Indians, as he learned their language and tranſlated into it the Holy Bible; Sheppard, Mayhew, and others, exerted themſelves with an ardent zeal, at once to civilize and convert thoſe fierce and unruly nations. The attention of the public was ſoon drawn to theſe important objects; and, in the year 1647, the Engliſh Parliament committed the care of them to a ſociety conſiſting of perſons eminent for their rank and influence. The execution of their religious projects was ſuſpended amidſt the heat and hurry of inteſtine commotion. But when the civil wars were ended, the ſociety was eſtabliſhed upon a firmer footing under Charles II. in the year 1661. King William III. conferred upon it many marks of royal favour, and ſucceeding Princes as well as multitudes of private individuals, have enriched it with additional donations and legacies.

The

The united provinces have not been deficient in the duty of enlightening the Pagan nations with the Goſpel, where they have acquired ſettlements, particularly in the Eaſt Indies, in the iſlands of Amboyna, Java, Ceylon, and Formoſa, and upon the coaſts of Malabar. This laſt named place is a large populous country, upon the weſtern coaſt of the peninſula of India, on this ſide the *Ganges*. The ſouth end is inhabited by thoſe who call themſelves the Chriſtians of St Thomas, becauſe they were converted by the apoſtle of that name. They remained for 1300 years under the juriſdiction of the Patriarch of Babylon, who ſometimes ſent them an archbiſhop to regulate more effectually their eccleſiaſtical affairs. The firſt news of them which came to Europe was in the year 1501, when ſome of the Chriſtian natives arrived at Portugal. They hate and deſpiſe the doctrines of Popery, and diſavow all ſubjection to the See of Rome, notwithſtanding frequent attempts to procure their ſubmiſſion and obedience. Even ſo lately as in the year 1717, there was an epiſtle in Syriac printed at Leyden, which came from the Biſhop of the ancient Syrian Chriſtians in Malabar, whom they call Maha-Thome, or Great Thomas. The profeſſor of oriental languages in Leyden returned him a letter, at ſame time ſent, as a preſent, his Syriac New Teſtament, ſo that a freſh correſpondence was then opened *.

I might here obſerve, that in Scotland a ſociety was conſtituted for propagating Chriſtian knowledge, by letters patent from Queen Anne, in May 1709. A ſecond patent was obtained from King George II. in June 1738, not only ratifying the original

* The number of Chriſtians in Malabar was computed to be 100,000, in the year 1720.—Millar's Prop. of Chriſt. vol. II. p. 479.

original deed, but conſiderably enlarging the powers and privileges of the ſociety. And although their endeavours have been principally employed in reforming the Highlands and Iſlands of Scotland, where ignorance, ſuperſtition and Popery prevailed, yet they have not altogether reſtricted themſelves within theſe bounds, but extended their pious cares abroad, particularly in America, for the converſion of the Indian tribes.

Frederick IV. King of Denmark, did, in the year 1705, likewiſe ſet on foot the deſign of propagating the Goſpel in foreign parts. It was immediately carried into execution, and miſſionaries were ſent to Tranquebar ſituated on the coaſt of Coromandel.

They have been very zealous, active, and ſucceſsful, in ſpreading the light of Chriſtianity in the Eaſt-Indies. In the years 1717 and 1718, the Royal Daniſh Miſſionaries wrote two letters to his Britannick Majeſty, George I. giving an account of the meaſures they purſued, and of the progreſs they made; and the King was pleaſed to return them a moſt gracious anſwer, inviting them to a further correſpondence, encouraging them in the good work they had undertaken, and declaring his readineſs to aſſiſt them in it *.

We have already ſeen the great pains taken by the Church of Rome to compenſate for the loſs ſhe ſuſtained upon the Reformation, by ſeeking to ſpread her doctrine, and enlarge her dominion, in Aſia, Africa, and America. Yet neither was ſhe idle in Europe, the other quarter of the globe. Many various ſchemes were projected, innumerable arts and ſtratagems tried, all the reſources of genius exhauſted, and the force of arms employed to

* Millar's Propagation of Chriſtianity, vol. II. p. 498, *&c. &c.*

to oppreſs the Proteſtants, to raviſh from them the advantages they had gained, and to recover out of their hands the valuable provinces and kingdoms which had renounced the Romiſh religion. At laſt they kindled the flames of a religious war; the plan of a formidable attack upon all the friends of the Reformation was concerted; and the perſecuting, bigotted houſe of Auſtria was pitched on to carry it into execution. The religious liberties and civil rights of the Auſtrians and Bohemians, ſecured to them by the moſt ſolemn treaties, were violated in the groſſeſt manner. The firſt indeed found themſelves unable to reſiſt the ſhock and to maintain their privileges. But the Bohemian Proteſtants aſſuming greater courage, armed for their religion and liberty, took terrible revenge upon their adverſaries; and upon the death of the Emperor Mathias, did elect for King of Bohemia Frederick V. Elector Palatine, a Prince of the reformed Religion, and with great ſolemnity crowned him at Prague, in the year 1619.

This bold meaſure, from which the greateſt advantages were expected, proved a ſource of complicated miſeries. Frederick was defeated by the imperial army, in the year 1620, and deprived at once of his new dignity, and of his hereditary dominions. The Auſtrian and Bavarian armies ravaged in a mercileſs manner his fine and extenſive territories; the Bohemians, who had embarked in the cauſe from zeal to the reformed Religion, were debarred the exerciſe of it, and obliged to ſubmit to the tyranny of Rome: And many of them were put to death, whilſt others had their eſtates confiſcated, or were condemned to perpetual baniſhment.

Hereupon, a long and bloody war was produced, in which moſt of the Princes of Europe were unfortunately engaged. The King of Denmark entered

tered into a confederacy with ſeveral of the German States, in order to aſſert the rights of the Elector Palatine againſt the ſevere and arbitrary meaſures of the Emperor. The allies, however, were unſucceſsful: Victory accompanied the imperial arms, and the votaries of Rome were fluſhed with the moſt ſanguine hopes, that this would prove the beginning of an univerſal triumph over the Proteſtants. The Emperor himſelf, elated with conqueſt, prompted by ambition and bigotry, appeared to threaten both the civil and ſacred rights of the Germanic empire. He made a military progreſs through a great part of Germany, and harraſſed the States and Princes who would not ſubmit to the Romiſh yoke. John George I. Elector of Saxony though a Lutheran Prince, yet actuated by violent prejudices againſt thoſe of the Calviniſtical or reformed perſuaſion, from a zealous attachment to the Emperor, and other political motives, concurred in theſe deſpotic meaſures, and afforded powerful aid. To crown all, Ferdinand II. did, in the year 1629, iſſue out the Reſtitution edict, obliging the Proteſtants to reſtore to Rome all the revenues and poſſeſſions ceded to them in the preceding century, in virtue of the *religious peace* then concluded.

It would be difficult to deſcribe the alarm or terrible conſequences of this imperial mandate, the diſſentions and tumults which it occaſioned, the bold claims that were ſtarted by the Roman Catholic prieſts and monks, the rapacity, force and fraud employed by them, or the numberleſs diſaſters and calamities in which the Proteſtants were involved.

In this critical and diſmal ſituation of affairs, Guſtavus Adolphus King of Sweden, that glorious and immortal hero, appeared on the field, and undertook

undertook a defence of the Germanic liberties, againſt the deſpotiſm and cruelty of the houſe of Auſtria. With no very numerous army he departed for Germany in the year 1632, and by a ſurprizing ſeries of victories, he blaſted the towering hopes which the Pope and Emperor entertained of extinguiſhing the Proteſtant Religion, at leaſt within the bounds of the empire. This illuſtrious Prince fell in the battle of Lutzen, in the year 1632; but ſtill the war was carried on with great ardour for many years, by the gallant commanders of the Swediſh army, under Chriſtina daughter and ſucceſſor of Guſtavus.

At laſt, after a war of thirty years continuance, attended with great effuſion of blood and expence of treaſure, the famous treaty of peace was concluded in Weſtphalia, in the year 1648. By it the Proteſtants derived many important advantages and privileges, which the Court of Rome beheld with envy, and with all the pangs of diſappointed ambition. The Emperor indeed refuſed to reſtore the *Upper* Palatinate, or to re-inſtate the Bohemians and Auſtrians in the enjoyment of their former religious liberties. But the peace of Augſburg was ratified, which the Proteſtants had obtained from Charles V. the Reſtitution-edict was abrogated, and both the contending parties were confirmed in a perpetual poſſeſſion of what they had held in the year 1624.

The Roman Pontifs did not loſe ſight of the Greek church, but were earneſtly ſollicitous to recover their intereſt at Conſtantinople, and to ſubject to the Papal hierarchy the empire of Ruſſia, the great bulwark of the Grecian faith, though all their attempts proved abortive. That body of Chriſtians who live in religious communion with the Patriarch of Conſtantinople, is denominated the

the Greek or eaſtern Church, one part of which acknowledges his ſupreme juriſdiction, whilſt another is governed by peculiar inſtitutions and ſpiritual rulers of their own. Alexandria, Antioch, and Jeruſalem, are each of them dignified with a Patriarch, but acknowledge themſelves ſubordinate to the See of Conſtantinople. The eccleſiaſtical dominion of the Byzantian Patriarch is very extenſive, and comprehends a great part of Greece, the Grecian iſlands, Moldavia, Wallachia, alſo ſeveral European and Aſiatic provinces that are ſubject to the Ottoman Porte. The Alexandrian Primate reſides at Cairo, and exerciſes his ſpiritual power in Egypt, Libya, Nubia, and Arabia. The Patriarch of Antioch lives at Damaſcus, and has Syria, Cilicia, and Meſopotamia ſubject to him; whilſt the Patriarch of Jeruſalem extends his authority over Paleſtine, part of Arabia, and the country beyond Jordan.

Although the Partriarch of Conſtantinople is elected by twelve Biſhops who reſide neareſt that famous city, yet he muſt be confirmed by the Turkiſh Emperor.

By his permiſſion he not only exerciſes ſpiritual authority, but likewiſe takes cognizance of civil matters among the members of his church, and has a ſupreme power of excommunication veſted in him, which appears to all of that communion a moſt tremendous evil.

The Greeks acknowledge the Holy Scriptures and the decrees of the firſt ſeven œcumenical Councils as the rule of Faith, the explication of which is entirely left to the Patriarch and his brethren.

Deplorable ignorance, licentiouſneſs and impiety have too general a reign among the Greeks, whilſt they groan under the Turkiſh yoke. They are ſplit into many ſects and parties, and their religion

is encumbered with a groupe of frivolous and ſuperſtitious ceremonies. Yet they retain an invincible averſion to the Latin church, and have reſiſted all the arts and efforts employed by the Roman Pontifs to gain upon them. Theſe have indeed founded a few churches in ſome of the iſlands of the Archipelago; but they are ſmall and inconſiderable; nor will either the Greeks or Turks permit the Romiſh miſſionaries to enlarge their influence and dominion any further.

A new method of attack was deviſed by the Church of Rome more inſidious than honeſt, which was to perſuade the Greeks that they had always been good Catholics, and that the difference betwixt them only related to certain modes of expreſſion, and ſome ceremonies which did not affect the eſſence of Religion. Theſe artful inſinuations were, however, ſuſpected and expoſed by many, who bore an irreconcileable hatred to the See of Rome. None appeared in this oppoſition with more firmneſs, fortitude and zeal, than Cyrillus Lucar, Patriarch of Conſtantinople. He was a Prelate of extenſive learning, had made the grand tour of Europe, was well acquainted with the world and mankind, and no ſtranger to the doctrine and diſcipline both of the Romiſh and Reformed churches. In order to deſtroy at once all the deſigns and hopes formed by the votaries of Rome, with reſpect to a junction between the eaſtern and weſtern churches, he openly declared a ſtrong predilection in favour of the Proteſtant Religion as eſtabliſhed in England and Holland, and avowed an intention to reform the doctrine and diſcipline of the Greeks, and to make them approach nearer to the genuine purity of the Goſpel. This cauſed a great alarm among the partizans of Popery, and created numerous and violent enemies

to

to the venerable Patriarch. The Jeſuits, in particular, conceived black and bloody deſigns againſt him, they ſeduced ſome perfidious Greeks into a treacherous conſpiracy, drew in the French ambaſſador into their intrigues, and with ſcandalous malignity ſuborned falſe witneſſes to accuſe him of treaſon. In conſequence of this, he was cruelly put to death, by order of the Turkiſh Emperor, in the year 1638. He was ſucceeded in the See of Conſtantinople by the Biſhop of Berea, who had been an infamous inſtrument in promoting the ruin of his predeceſſor. During his ſhort pontificate there was ſome probability of effectuating the long wiſhed for union, as he publicly declared his attachment to Rome. But he was ſoon cut off by a violent death; and Parthenius, who was next advanced to the patriarchal dignity, oppoſed with diſtinguiſhed zeal the doctrines and pretenſions of the church of Rome, and that with ſuch ſucceſs as to prevent any future efforts.

All expectations from Ruſſia are likewiſe defeated, nor have the moſt political Pontifs, and the utmoſt addreſs of the Court of Rome, been able to make any deep or dangerous impreſſion there. When *Peter* the Great aſcended the Ruſſian throne, that magnanimous and creative Prince, did not only give a new face to the civil government and policy of that country, but, in a great meaſure, new-modelled its eccleſiaſtical ſtate. He indeed made no change in the articles of faith, which were agreeable to the doctrine of the Grecian Church. But he was at great pains to get them explained comformably to the genius and ſcope of the Goſpel, and to the principles of unprejudiced reaſon. He laboured inceſſantly to inſtruct and reform both clergy and laity, and to diſpell the clouds of ſuperſtition that ſat brooding over the nation. He himſelf

ſelf became the liberal patron of the arts and ſciences, founded many ſeminaries of learning, rouzed his ſubjects from a ſtate of ignorance and lethargy, and made them emerge from their former barbariſm into the light of knowledge and improvement. Whilſt he put Roman Catholics under proper reſtrictions, he granted liberty of conſcience to other Chriſtians, baniſhed that demon of perſecution, and aboliſhed all penal laws on a religious account. With a view to place theſe important matters more directly under his own eye and cognizance, and to check the ſplendid progreſs of patriarchal power in his dominions, which ſeemed to ſhade the luſtre of imperial prerogative, he declared himſelf the head and ſupreme protector of the Ruſſian Church.

After the peace of Weſtphalia was concluded, of which we made mention ſome time ago, the Court of Rome was laid under conſiderable reſtraints. But if it did not wage war in the moſt open and public manner againſt the Proteſtants, yet whenever they had power and opportunity, they perſecuted and oppreſſed them with unwearied cruelty. Thus in Hungary, both Lutherans and Calviniſts were harraſſed by the Roman Pontifs for the ſpace of ten years. In Poland, ſuch who oppoſed Papal pretenſions, were expoſed to continual trouble and vexation during the courſe of this century, deprived of their churches, and plundered of their poſſeſſions, in violation of ſolemn treaties and conventions. The remains of the Waldenſes who dwelt in the vallies of Piedmont, were hunted down and treated with the utmoſt inhumanity, eſpecially in the years 1633, 1655, 1685, and 1696. In Germany, many flragrant acts of injuſtice were committed by the partizans of Popery, in manifeſt contempt of the peace agreed upon. And all theſe

infractions

infractions of the treaty of Weſtphalia, flowed from a ſpirit of bigotry and zeal for the ſuperſtition of Rome, and were intended to obſcure, if they could not extinguiſh, the light of the Reformation.

This perſecuting principle raged with a ſingular degree of ferocity in France, and exhibited to view many diſmal and calamitous ſcenes. After the acceſſion of Henry IV. to the throne of that kingdom, the Proteſtants there, commonly called Hugonots, were incorporated into a body-politic, were ſecured in the enjoyment of their civil and religious rights by ſolemn edict, and had very important privileges conferred upon them. They were even put in poſſeſſion of ſome well fortified cities, particularly Rochelle, a place of great ſtrength, and allowed to keep ſoldiers and garriſons of their own. From this extraordinary circumſtance alone might be learned the great number, power, and weight of the Proteſtants in France, who could obtain ſuch uncommon advantages, ſuch as almoſt appear inconſiſtent with regular ſubordination and government, and to be like —*Imperium in Imperio*— one powerful and independent ſociety within the boſom of another. Accordingly upon ſome occaſions they acted with freedom and boldneſs. This, impartial hiſtory muſt candidly acknowledge. Whether from motives of policy or faction, ſecurity or religion, an ardent zeal for their own which they knew to be true, or an abhorrence of Popery which they looked on as falſe and ſuperſtitious; ſo it was, that they tranſacted moſt momentous matters without the knowledge or conſent of their Sovereign, and courted the alliance of England and Holland, as a ſeparate ſtate. Hence aroſe civil broils and animoſities in the year 1621, which continued for a long time between the French King Lewis XIII. and his Proteſtant ſubjects. Richlieu his

his prime miniſter endeavoured to perſuade him, that ſound policy and the public tranquility required a ſuppreſſion of thoſe high privileges in which the Proteſtants were inveſted, and that they ſhould be deprived of all their ſtrong-holds, their guards and garriſons. A deſpotic Prince liſtened with eagerneſs to ſuch ſort of counſel, and followed out the plan propoſed by his favourite. In the year 1628, the city of Rochelle was beſieged, and after a long and gallant defence, it was taken by the French Monarch and annexed for ever to the crown. When this principal bulwark of the Proteſtants in France was removed, other places belonging to them fell an eaſy ſacrifice, their ſpirit and intereſt declined apace, and they were reduced to an abſolute dependence upon the pleaſure of the Prince. But he not ſatisfied with the victory obtained, and indiſpoſed to ſhew kindneſs or generoſity, perfidiouſly invaded thoſe religious liberties which had been granted to the Proteſtants by moſt expreſs law, and that with the ſame diſregard to paction and treaty as he had exhibited, in attacking and deſtroying thoſe civil rights and poſſeſſions, which had been aſſigned them for the ſecurity of the other. Nay, when flattery and promiſes could not prevail on the Proteſtants, to renounce that reformed religion for which they had contended ſo gloriouſly and ſhed ſo much blood, every ſpecies of violence and barbarity was employed againſt them. The moſt unjuſt laws, the moſt tyrannical edicts were publiſhed, and all the oppreſſive methods which a perſecuting ſpirit and bigotry could invent, were taken, to ſhake their conſtancy, and to ſubject them to the galling yoke of Rome. In the reign of Lewis XIV. theſe harſh and arbitrary meaſures were ſtill purſued. Inſtigated by the counſels and importunity of French Biſhops and Jeſuits, who with

with intemperate zeal ſought the utter ruin of the Reformation in France, he, in the year 1685, revoked the edict of Nantes, in open defiance of law and juſtice. Even many Roman Catholics could not but condemn this revocation, and, actuated by natural ſentiments of humanity and equity, conſidered it as a groſs violation of public faith, and as moſt injurious to the whole body of Proteſtants. They were now robbed of their birthright, and deprived of the invaluable privilege of worſhipping God according to their conſcience, which had been guaranted to them in the moſt ſolemn manner, by the law of the land. Nay, to crown this ſcene of iniquity, a further order was iſſued, requiring all the members of the reformed Church to renounce the Proteſtant profeſſion, and to embrace the Popiſh religion.

In conſequence of this, the public exerciſe of the reformed Religion which, for about a century paſt, had been enjoyed under the ſanction of law, was entirely aboliſhed in France, the Proteſtant miniſters were ſilenced, their churches were pulled down, and their congregations diſperſed or diſcharged under the ſevereſt penalties to aſſemble any more. It is not eaſy to conceive the conſternation and calamity occaſioned by ſuch tyrannical edicts, amongſt the numerous and reſpectable members of the reformed Church. Many fled from the impending ſtorm, abandoned their friends, their families, and native country, and found refuge in foreign kingdoms. Others who ſtaid or were confined at home, felt the unrelenting hand of perſecution, were expoſed to the rage of brutal ſoldiers, and to all the hardſhips and oppreſſions of a depreſſed and deſpiſed party. Such the genius and magic of Popery, which can blind and bewitch mankind to ſuch a degree, as to make them not only to deny their

ſenſes

ſenſes and reaſon, but alſo to counteract their intereſt, if thereby Romiſh ſuperſtition and dominion may be promoted! For all generally acknowledge, that beſides the injuſtice of theſe proceedings, they were in fact highly prejudicial to the welfare of France. That kingdom loſt a vaſt number of its valuable ſubjects, a multitude of which conſtitutes the ſtrength of a ſtate: They emigrated into other countries, and carried their wealth, their ingenuity, their arts and manufactures along with them to enrich ſtrangers, who, with wiſdom as well as humanity, opened their arms, and afforded that protection which the mother-country had unnaturally refuſed.

The other churches of the Reformation enjoyed a larger ſhare of ſerenity and repoſe, ſtood on a more firm and ſolid baſis, arrived gradually to greater ſtability, and by the favour and bleſſing of Divine Providence continue to this day.

In virtue of the glorious Reformation, that grand and memorable Revolution, the face of affairs was wonderfully changed, and philoſophy, learning, and religion, reared up their venerable heads in triumph and ſecurity, and produced the moſt beneficial effects. The arts and ſciences formerly uncultivated or miſunderſtood, are now properly improved and carried to a ſublime pitch of refinement. The immortal Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, unſealed the ſprings and opened up the channels of ſcience. Galilei appeared in Italy, Deſcartes and Gaſſendi in France, the celebrated Grotius in Holland, Tycho Brahe in Denmark; whilſt Boyle and Newton adorned England, and in Germany ſhone Kepler, Hevelius, and Leibnitz, as did the two Bernoulli in Switzerland. Thoſe bright, original luminaries led the way, excited a love of letters, a ſpirit of refined emulation in Europe, and were followed

followed by an illuſtrious train of literati, ſkilled in every branch of knowledge Divine and human, and who diffuſed a taſte for truth and improvement all around.

The bleſſed Reformation happily emancipated many kingdoms and countries from the ſhackles of ignorance, ſuperſtition and tyranny; it even darted its reviving light and ſalutary influence, in an inferior degree, through Popiſh provinces, and has been of eminent ſervice, in many reſpects, to all Chriſtendom. The native ſpirit and ſyſtem of Popery remain the ſame.—But the Roman Pontifs, grown wiſer by long experience, from a retroſpect to former miſcarriages and loſſes, over-awed by the power and proximity of neighbouring ſtates, who deſpiſe their ghoſtly pretenſions and excommunications, or conſcious of the ſuperior knowledge, ſpirit, and freedom, which now reign among their own votaries, ſince ſo much light and liberty have broke in upon and charmed the reſt of mankind, ——For theſe reaſons,—the modern Popes are now reſtrained within more moderate bounds, and dare not in theſe enlightened times, concert or avow ſuch ambitious and deſpotic projects, as in periods of ancient ſuperſtition and barbariſm involved and ſubjected a ſlaviſh and deluded world: And it is on good ground that we entertain the pleaſing perſuaſion, that Papal power and ſuperſtition ſhall one day be totally deſtroyed; that men ſhall behold a general as they have already ſeen a partial Reformation; and that genuine Chriſtianity ſhall have an univerſal ſpread, and eſtabliſh its empire among all nations.

F I N I S.

Foot NOTES omitted.

For page 9th line 12th.—— " Pluribus perſuaſio in-
" erat, antiquis ſacerdotibus libris contineri, eo ipſo tempore
" fore, ut valeſceret oriens, profectique Judeâ rerum po-
" tirentur. Tacit. lib. 21, ſect. 13."

Suetonius ſays, " Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus et
" conſtans opinio, eſſe in ſatis, ut Judeâ profecti rerum poti-
" rentur.

For p. 19th. —— " Soliti eſſent Chriſtiani convenire,
" carmenque Chriſto quaſi Deo dicere. Plin. Epiſt."